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ROMANCE.

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Vol. 6

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Most of the prose compositions of Edgar A. Poe have little in common with the stories of the present day. Wild, disjointed and impossible, they set at defiance all the rules of realism and of artistic verity: but the force and fancy with which they are instinct produced a profound impression upon the generation for which they were written. This was not confined to our own land. On foreign literatures, especially upon that of the Italians, Poe has left an unmistakable imprint. There is little time, in the rush of modern life, for the reading of Poe. It is for the sake of recalling the best of his work to the public notice that we reprint (abridged somewhat in order to adapt it to our space) the following extraordinary tale. No one will think of accusing Mr. Stevenson of plagiarism; but "The Two William Wilsons" must inevitably suggest that remarkable intellectual *tour de force*, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

THE TWO WILLIAM WILSONS.

LET me call myself, for the present, William Wilson. The fair page now lying before me need not be sullied with my real appellation. This has been already too much an object for the scorn—for the horror—for the detestation of men.

I am the descendant of a race whose imaginative and easily excitable temperament has at all times rendered them remarkable; and, in my earliest infancy, I gave evidence of having fully inherited the family character. As I advanced in years, it was more strongly developed; becoming, for many reasons, a source of serious disquietude to my friends, and of positive injury to myself. I grew self-willed, addicted to the wildest caprices, and a prey to the most ungovernable passions. Weak-minded, and beset with constitutional infirmities akin to my own, my parents could do but little to check the evil propensities which distinguished me. Some feeble and ill-directed efforts resulted in complete failure on their part, and, of course, in total triumph on mine. Thenceforward my voice was a household law; and at an age when few children have abandoned their leading-strings, I was left to the guidance of my own will,

and became, in all but name, the master of my own actions.

My earliest recollections of a school-life are connected with a large, rambling, Elizabethan house, in a misty-looking village of England, where were a vast number of gigantic and gnarled trees, and where all the houses were excessively ancient. In truth, it was a dream-like and spirit-soothing place, that venerable old town. At this moment in fancy, I feel the refreshing chilliness of its deeply-shadowed avenues, inhale the fragrance of its thousand shrubberies, and thrill anew, with indefinable delight, at the deep, hollow note of the church-bell, breaking, each hour, with sullen and sudden roar, upon the stillness of the dusky atmosphere in which the fretted Gothic steeple lay imbedded and asleep.

It gives me, perhaps, as much pleasure as I can now in any manner experience, to dwell upon minute recollections of this school and its concerns. Steeped in misery as I am—misery, alas! only too real—I shall be pardoned for seeking relief, however slight and temporary, in the weakness of a few rambling details. Let me then remember.

The house, as I have said, was old and irregular. The grounds were extensive, and a high and solid brick wall, topped with a bed of mortar and broken glass, encompassed the whole. This prison-like rampart formed the limit of our domain; beyond it we saw but thrice a week—once every Saturday afternoon, when, attended by two ushers, we were permitted to take brief walks in a body through some of the neighboring fields—and twice during Sunday, when we were paraded in the same formal manner to the morning and evening service in the one church of the village. Of this church Dr. Bransby, the principal of our school, was pastor.

Encompassed by the massy walls of this venerable academy, I passed, yet not in tedium or disgust, the years of the third lustrum of my life. The ardor, the enthusiasm, and the imperiousness of my disposition, soon rendered me a marked character among my schoolmates, and by slow, but natural gradations, gave me

an ascendency over all not greatly older than myself;—over all with a single exception. This exception was found in the person of a scholar, who, although no relation to me, bore the same Christian and surname as myself;—a circumstance, in fact, little remarkable; for, notwithstanding a noble descent, mine was one of those everyday appellations which seem, by proscriptive right, to have been, time out of mind, the common property of the mob. In this narrative I have therefore designated myself as William Wilson,—a fictitious title not very dissimilar to the real. My namesake alone, of those who in school phraseology constituted "our set," presumed to compete with me in the studies of the class—in the sports and broils of the play-ground—to refuse implicit belief in my assertions, and submission to my will—indeed, to interfere with my arbitrary dictation in every possible way. If there is on earth a supreme and unqualified despotism, it is the despotism of a master mind in boyhood over the less energetic spirits of its companions.

Wilson's rebellion was to me a source of the greatest embarrassment; the more so as, in spite of the bravado with which in public I made a point of treating him and his pretensions, I secretly feared him, and could not help thinking the equality which he maintained so easily with myself a proof of his true superiority; since not to be overcome cost me a perpetual struggle. Yet this superiority—even this equality—was in truth acknowledged by no one but myself; our associates, by some unaccountable blindness, seemed not even to suspect it. Indeed, his competition, his resistance, and especially his impertinent and dogged interference with my purposes, were not more pointed than private. He appeared to be destitute alike of the ambition which urged, and of the passionate energy of mind which enabled me to excel. In his rivalry he might have been supposed to be actuated solely by a whimsical desire to thwart, astonish, or mortify myself; although there were times when I could not help observing, with a feeling made up of wonder, abasement, and pique, that

he mingled with his injuries, his insults, or his contradictions, a certain most inappropriate, and assuredly most unwelcome, affectionateness of manner. I could only conceive his singular behavior to arise from a consummate self-conceit assuming the vulgar airs of patronage and protection.

Perhaps it was this little trait in Wilson's conduct, conjoined with our identity of name, and the mere accident of our having entered the school the same day, which set afloat the notion that we were brothers, among the senior class in the academy. These do not usually inquire with much strictness into the affairs of their juniors. I have before said, or should have said, that Wilson was not, in a most remote degree, connected with my family. But assuredly if we had been brothers, we must have been twins; for, after leaving Dr. Bransby's, I casually learned that my namesake was born on the nineteenth of January, 1813—and this is a somewhat remarkable coincidence; for the day is precisely that of my own nativity.

It may seem strange that, in spite of the continual anxiety occasioned me by the rivalry of Wilson, and his intolerable spirit of contradiction, I could not bring myself to hate him altogether. We had, to be sure, nearly every day a quarrel, in which, yielding me publicly the palm of victory, he, in some manner, contrived to make me feel that it was he who had deserved it; yet a sense of pride on my part, and a veritable dignity on his own, kept us always upon what are called "speaking terms," while there were many points of strong congeniality in our tempers operating to awake in me a sentiment which our positions alone, perhaps, prevented from ripening into friendship. It is difficult, indeed, to define, or even to describe, my real feelings toward him. They formed a motley and heterogeneous admixture;—some petulant animosity, which was not yet hatred, some esteem, more respect, much fear, with a world of uneasy curiosity. To the moralist it will be necessary to say, in addition, that Wilson and myself were the most inseparable of companions.

It was no doubt the anomalous state of affairs existing between us, which turned all my attacks upon him, (and there were many, either open or covert) into the channel of banter or practical joke (giving pain while assuming the aspect of mere fun) rather than into a more serious and determined hostility. But my endeavors on this head were by no means uniformly successful, even when my plans were the most wittily concocted; for my namesake had much about him, in character, of that unassuming and quiet austerity which, enjoying the poignancy of its own jokes, has no heel of Achilles in itself, and absolutely refuses to be laughed at. I could find, indeed, but one vulnerable point, and that, lying in a personal peculiarity, arising, perhaps, from constitutional disease, would have been spared by any antagonist less at his wit's end than myself;—my rival had a weakness in the faucial or guttural organs, which precluded him from raising his voice at any time above a very low whisper. Of this defect I did not fail to take what poor advantage lay in my power.

I had not then discovered the remarkable fact that we were of the same age; but I saw that we were of the same height, and I perceived that we were even singularly alike in general contour of person and outline of feature. I was galled, too, by the rumor touching a relationship, which had grown current in the upper forms. In a word, nothing could more seriously disturb me (although I scrupulously concealed such disturbance) than any allusion to a similarity of mind, person, or condition existing between us. But, in truth, I had no reason to believe that (with the exception of the matter of relationship, and in the case of Wilson himself,) this similarity had ever been made a subject of comment, or even observed at all, by our schoolfellows. That he observed it in all its bearings, and as fixedly as I, was apparent; but that he could discover in such circumstances so fruitful a field of annoyance, can only be attributed, as I said, to his more than ordinary penetration.

His cue, which was to perfect an imitation of myself, lay both in words and in actions; and most admirably did he play his part. My dress it was an easy matter to copy; my gait and general manner were, without difficulty, appropriated; in spite of his constitutional defect, even my voice did not escape him. My louder tones were, of course, unattempted, but then the key,—it was identical; and his singular whisper, it grew the very echo of my own.

I have already more than once spoken of the disgusting air of patronage which he assumed toward me, and of his frequent officious interference with my will. This interference often took the ungracious character of advice; advice not openly given, but hinted or insinuated. I received it with a repugnance which gained strength as I grew in years. Yet, at this distant day, let me do him the simple justice to acknowledge that I can recall no occasion when the suggestions of my rival were on the side of those errors or follies so usual to his immature age and seeming inexperience; that his moral sense, at least, if not his general talents and worldly wisdom, was far keener than my own; and that I might, to-day, have been a better and thus a happier man, had I less frequently rejected the counsels embodied in those meaning whispers which I then but too cordially hated and too bitterly despised.

As it was, I at length grew restive in the extreme under his distasteful supervision, and daily resented more and more openly what I considered his intolerable arrogance. I have said that, in the first years of our connection as schoolmates, my feelings in regard to him might have been easily ripened into friendship; but, in the latter months of my residence at the academy, although the intrusion of his ordinary manner had, beyond doubt, in some measure, abated, my sentiments, in nearly similar proportion, partook very much of positive hatred. Upon one occasion he saw this, I think, and afterwards avoided, or made a show of avoiding me.

Upon leaving the school, after the lapse of some

months, spent at home in mere idleness, I found myself a student at Eton. The vortex of thoughtless folly into which I there immediately and so recklessly plunged, washed away all but the froth of my past hours, ingulfed at once every serious impression, and left to memory only the veriest levities of a former existence. I do not wish, however, to trace the course of my miserable profligacy here—a profligacy which set at defiance the laws, while it eluded the vigilance, of the institution. Three years of folly, passed without profit, had but given me rooted habits of vice, and added, in a somewhat unusual degree, to my bodily stature, when, after a week of soulless dissipation, I invited a small party of the most dissolute students to a secret carousal in my chambers. We met at a late hour of the night. The wine flowed freely, and there were not wanting other and perhaps more dangerous seductions; so that the gray dawn had already faintly appeared in the east while our delirious extravagance was at its height. Madly flushed with cards and intoxication, I was in the act of insisting upon a toast of more than wonted profanity, when my attention was suddenly diverted by the violent, although partial, unclosing of the door of the apartment, and by the eager voice of a servant from without. He said that some person, apparently in great haste, demanded to speak with me in the hall.

Wildly excited with wine, the unexpected interruption rather delighted than surprised me. I staggered forward at once, and a few steps brought me to the vestibule of the building. In this low and small room there hung no lamp; and no light at all was admitted, save that of the exceedingly feeble dawn which made its way through the semi-circular window. As I put my foot over the threshold, I became aware of the figure of a youth about my own height, and habited in a white kerseymere morning frock, cut in the novel fashion of the one I myself wore at the moment. This the faint light enabled me to perceive; but the features of his face I could not distinguish. Upon my entering, he strode hurriedly up to me, and, seizing me by the arm

with a gesture of petulant impatience, whispered the words "William Wilson" in my ear.

I grew perfectly sober in an instant.

There was that in the manner of the stranger, and in the tremulous shake of his uplifted finger, as he held it between my eyes and the light, which filled me with unqualified amazement; but it was not this which had so violently moved me. It was the pregnantly solemn admonition in the singular, low, hissing utterance; and, above all, it was the character, the tone, the key, of those few, simple, and familiar, yet whispered syllables, which came with a thousand thronging memories of by-gone days, and struck upon my soul with the shock of a galvanic battery. Ere I could discover the use of my senses, he was gone.

Although this event failed not of a vivid effect upon my disordered imagination, yet was it evanescent as vivid. For some weeks, indeed, I busied myself in earnest inquiry, or was wrapped in a cloud of morbid speculation. I did not pretend to disguise from my perception the identity of the singular individual who thus perseveringly interfered with my affairs, and harassed me with his insinuated counsel. But who and what was this Wilson?—and whence came he?—and what were his purposes? Upon none of these points could I be satisfied—merely ascertaining, in regard to him, that a sudden accident in his family had caused his removal from Dr. Bransby's academy on the afternoon of the day on which I myself had departed. But in a brief period I ceased to think about the subject, my attention being all absorbed in a contemplated departure for Oxford. Thither I soon went, the uncalculating vanity of my parents furnishing me with an outfit and annual establishment which would enable me to indulge at will in the luxury already so dear to my heart—to vie in profuseness of expenditure with the haughtiest heirs of the wealthiest earldoms in Great Britain.

But it were absurd to pause in the detail of my extravagance. Let it suffice, that among spendthrifts I out-Heroded Herod, and that, giving name to a multi-

tude of novel follies, I added no brief appendix to the long catalogue of vices then usual in the most dissolute university of Europe.

It could hardly be credited, however, that I had, even here, so utterly fallen from the gentlemanly estate as to seek acquaintance with the vilest arts of the gambler by profession, and, having become an adept in his despicable science, to practise it habitually as a means of increasing my already enormous income at the expense of the weak-minded among my fellow-collegians. Such, nevertheless, was the fact. And the very enormity of this offence against all manly and honorable sentiment proved, beyond doubt, the main, if not the sole, reason of the impunity with which it was committed. Who, indeed, among my most abandoned associates, would not rather have disputed the clearest evidences of his senses than have suspected of such courses the gay, the frank, the generous William Wilson—the noblest and most liberal commoner at Oxford—him whose follies (said his parasites) were but the follies of youth and unbridled fancy—whose errors but inimitable whim—whose darkest vice but a careless and dashing extravagance?

I had been now two years successfully busied in this way, when there came to the university a young parvenu nobleman, Glendinning—rich, said report, as Herodes Atticus—his riches, too, as easily acquired. I soon found him of weak intellect, and, of course, marked him as a fitting subject for my skill. I frequently engaged him in play, and contrived, with the gambler's usual art, to let him win considerable sums, the more effectually to entangle him in my snares. At length, my schemes being ripe, I met him (with the full intention that this meeting should be final and decisive) at the chambers of a fellow-commoner (Mr. Preston), equally intimate with both, but who, to do him justice, entertained not even a remote suspicion of my design. To give to this a better coloring, I had contrived to have assembled a party of some eight or ten, and was solicitously careful that the introduction

of cards should appear accidental, and originate in the proposal of my contemplated dupe himself. To be brief upon a vile topic, none of the low finesse was omitted, so customary upon similar occasions, that it is a just matter for wonder how any are still found so besotted as to fall its victims.

We had protracted our sitting far into the night, and I had at length effected the manœuvre of getting Glendinning as my sole antagonist. The game, too, was my favorite écarté. The rest of the company, interested in the extent of our play, had abandoned their own cards, and were standing around us as spectators. The parvenu, who had been induced by my artifices in the early part of the evening to drink deeply, now shuffled, dealt, or played, with a wild nervousness of manner for which his intoxication, I thought, might partially, but could not altogether account. In a very short period he had become my debtor to a large amount, when, having taken a long draught of port, he did precisely what I had been coolly anticipating—he proposed to double our already extravagant stakes. With a well-feigned show of reluctance, and not until after my repeated refusal had seduced him into some angry words, which gave a color of pique to my compliance, did I finally comply. The result, of course, did but prove how entirely the prey was in my toils: in less than an hour he had quadrupled his debt.

Suddenly, the wide, heavy folding-doors of the apartment were all at once thrown open, to their full extent, with a vigorous and rushing impetuosity that extinguished, as if by magic, every candle in the room. Their light, in dying, enabled us just to perceive that a stranger had entered, about my own height, and closely muffled in a cloak. The darkness, however, was not total; and we could only feel that he was standing in our midst. Before any of us could recover from the extreme astonishment into which this rudeness had thrown all, we heard the voice of the intruder.

"Gentlemen," he said, in a low, distinct, and never-to-be-forgotten whisper, which thrilled to the very mar-

row of my bones, "Gentlemen, I make no apology for this behavior, because, in thus behaving, I am fulfilling a duty. You are, beyond doubt, uninformed of the true character of the person who has to-night won at écarté a large sum of money from Lord Glendinning. I will therefore put you upon an expeditious and decisive plan of obtaining this very necessary information. Please to examine, at your leisure, the inner linings of the cuff of his left sleeve, and the several little packages which may be found in the somewhat capacious pockets of his embroidered morning wrapper."

While he spoke, so profound was the stillness that one might have heard a pin drop upon the floor. In ceasing, he departed at once, and as abruptly as he had entered. Can I—shall I describe my sensations? Must I say that I felt all the horrors of the damned? Most assuredly I had little time for reflection. Many hands roughly seized me upon the spot, and lights were immediately reprocured. A search ensued. In the lining of my sleeve were found all the court cards essential in écarté, and in the pockets of my wrapper, a number of packs, fac-similes of those used at our sittings, with the single exception that mine were of the species called, technically, *arrondees;* the honors being slightly convex at the ends, the lower cards slightly convex at the sides. In this disposition, the dupe who cuts, as customary, at length of the pack, will invariably find that he cuts his antagonist an honor; while the gambler, cutting at the breadth, will as certainly cut nothing for his victim which may count in the records of the game.

Any burst of indignation upon this discovery would have affected me less than the silent contempt, or the sarcastic composure, with which it was received.

"Mr. Wilson," said our host, stooping to remove from his feet an exceedingly luxurious cloak of rare furs, "Mr. Wilson, this is your property." (The weather was cold; and, upon quitting my own room, I had thrown a cloak over my dressing wrapper, putting it off upon reaching the scene of play.) "I presume it is supererogatory to seek here" (eyeing the folds of

that garment with a bitter smile) "for any farther evidence of your skill. Indeed, we have had enough. You will see the necessity, I hope, of quitting Oxford—at all events, of quitting instantly my chambers."

Abased, humbled to the dust as I then was, it is probable that I should have resented this galling language by immediate personal violence, had not my whole attention been at the moment arrested by a fact of the most startling character. The cloak which I had worn was of a rare description of fur; how rare, how extravagantly costly, I shall not venture to say. Its fashion, too, was of my own fantastic invention; for I was fastidious to an absurd degree of coxcombry, in matters of this frivolous nature. When therefore Mr. Preston reached me that which he had picked up upon the floor, and near the folding-doors of the apartment, it was with an astonishment nearly bordering upon terror that I perceived my own already hanging on my arm, (where I had no doubt unwittingly placed it), and that the one presented me was but its exact counterpart in every, in even the minutest possible, particular. The singular being who had so disastrously exposed me had been muffled, I remembered, in a cloak; and none had been worn at all by any of the members of our party, with the exception of myself. Retaining some presence of mind, I took the one offered me by Preston; placed it, unnoticed, over my own; left the apartment with a resolute scowl of defiance; and, next morning ere dawn of day, commenced a hurried journey from Oxford to the Continent, in a perfect agony of horror and of shame.

I fled in vain. My evil destiny pursued me as if in exultation, and proved, indeed, that the exercise of its mysterious dominion had as yet only begun. Scarcely had I set foot in Paris, ere I had fresh evidence of the detestable interest taken by this Wilson in my concerns. Years flew, while I experienced no relief. Villain!—at Rome, with how untimely, yet with how spectral an officiousness, stepped he in between me and my ambition! at Vienna, too—at Berlin—and at Moscow! Where, in truth, had I not bitter cause to curse him

within my heart? From his inscrutable tyranny did I at length flee, panic-stricken, as from a pestilence; and to the very ends of the earth I fled in vain.

And again, and again, in secret communion with my own spirit would I demand the questions "Who is he? —whence came he?—and what are his objects?" But no answer was there found.

Thus far I had succumbed supinely to this imperious domination. The sentiment of deep awe with which I habitually regarded the elevated character, the majestic wisdom, the apparent omnipresence and omnipotence of Wilson, added to a feeling of even terror with which certain other traits in his nature and assumptions inspired me, had operated hitherto to impress me with an idea of my own utter weakness and helplessness, and to suggest an implicit although bitterly reluctant submission to his arbitrary will. But, of late days, I had given myself up entirely to wine; and its maddening influence upon my hereditary temper rendered me more and more impatient of control. I began to murmur, —to hesitate,—to resist. And was it only fancy which induced me to believe that with the increase of my own firmness, that of my tormentor underwent a proportional diminution? Be this as it may, I now began to feel the inspiration of a burning hope, and at length nurtured in my secret thoughts a stern and desperate resolution that I would submit no longer to be enslaved.

It was at Rome, during the Carnival of 18—, that I attended a masquerade in the palazzo of the Neapolitan Duke Di Broglio. I had indulged more freely than usual in the excesses of the wine-table; and now the suffocating atmosphere of the crowded rooms irritated me beyond endurance. The difficulty, too, of forcing my way through the maze of the company contributed not a little to the ruffling of my temper. At this moment I felt a light hand placed upon my shoulder, and that ever-remembered, low, damnable whisper within my ear.

In an absolute frenzy of wrath, I turned upon him who had thus interrupted me, and seized him violently

by the collar. He was attired, as I had expected, in a costume altogether similar to my own; wearing a Spanish cloak of blue velvet, begirt about the waist with a crimson belt sustaining a rapier. A mask of black silk entirely covered his face.

"Scoundrel!" I said, in a voice husky with rage, while every syllable I uttered seemed as new fuel to my fury; "scoundrel! impostor! accursed villain! you shall not —you shall not dog me unto death! Follow me, or I stab you where you stand!"—and I broke my way from the ball-room into a small ante-chamber adjoining, dragging him unresistingly with me as I went.

Upon entering, I thrust him furiously from me. He staggered against the wall, while I closed the door with an oath, and commanded him to draw. He hesitated but for an instant; then, with a slight sigh, drew in silence, and put himself upon his defence.

The contest was brief indeed. I was frantic with every species of wild excitement, and felt within my single arm the energy and power of a multitude. In a few seconds I forced him by sheer strength against the wainscoting, and, thus getting him at my mercy, plunged my sword, with brute ferocity, repeatedly through and through his bosom.

At that instant some persons tried the latch of the door. I hastened to prevent any intrusion, and then immediately turned to my dying antagonist. But what human language can adequately portray that astonishment, that horror which possessed me at the spectacle then presented to view? The brief moment in which I averted my eyes had been sufficient to produce, apparently, a material change in the arrangements at the upper or farther end of the room. A large mirror—so at first it seemed to me in my confusion—now stood where none had been perceptible before; and as I stepped up to it in extremity of terror, mine own image, but with features all pale and dabbled in blood, advanced to meet me with a feeble and tottering gait.

Thus it appeared, I say, but was not. It was my antagonist—it was Wilson, who then stood before me

in the agonies of his dissolution. His mask and cloak lay, where he had thrown them, upon the floor. Not a thread in all his raiment—not a line in all the marked and singular lineaments of his face which was not, even in the most absolute identity, mine own!

It was Wilson; but he spoke no longer in a whisper, and I could have fancied that I myself was speaking while he said:

"*You have conquered, and I yield. Yet henceforward art thou also dead—dead to the World, to Heaven, and to Hope! In me didst thou exist—and, in my death, see by this image, which is thine own, how utterly thou hast murdered thyself.*"

A valuable lesson for unwillingly prospective step-daughters is contained in the following clever story from *St. James's Gazette*. If rumor can be trusted, however, all widows do not so readily resent a momentary paroxysmal defection with so much spirit as did "Maria."

LOOSHA.

THE people who occupy the flat immediately beneath ours are great diners-out; and as their dog is of a sociable disposition, he commonly burrows under the door-mat and howls until the return of his proprietors. But the howls now heard by myself and my wife were distinctly human, and proceeded from our culinary department at the passage end. Something must have happened to Loosha! We sprang from the dinner-table, and made one bound to the kitchen-door. With instinctive delicacy we listened a moment before bursting in. The out-cries never ceased, though at times they sounded strangely muffled. Had a burglar dropped in for a late afternoon visit? Was he garrotting the too faithful creature who had refused to reveal the whereabouts of the plate basket? I grasped the soup-ladle—which I had unconsciously retained—with nervous determination. We rushed in quietly. There was no burglar. Only Loosha behind the scullery-door, with her head wrapped up in a towel, was giving vent to bursts of emotion which might well have aroused the envy of the poodle down-stairs. With compassion, slightly tempered with severity, we questioned the girl. She took some time to coax out of the chrysalis or pupa condition, but finally emerged from the folds of the towel and explained. Mother—who should have known better, having but a brief twelvemonth since interred her Second—was now receiving the addresses of a potential Third; himself a widower with nine incumbrances. In justice to the aspirant we may mention that he was fairly well to do, being a retired joiner by the name of Mr. Brown.

In Loosha's bitterest moments she deprived him of the prefix, calling him simply, and for short, "That There Brown."

The fell news had only just been brought by Loosha's little step-sister Emmeline, though Loosha had had a premonitory warning, in the way of creeps down her back whenever she had encountered the designing Mr. Brown, for some time past. It had been a-dorning in her mind, she said, by degrees as there was something up; and this very afternoon he had upped and spoke, most barefaced, on the identical door-step. Says he, "Mrs. Hemmans, I will not deceive you, that it was just through you dropping in, in a friendly way, to 'elp at the laying out of her as is gone (and her only buried eleven months) that my attention was, in a manner of speaking, drawed to you; and, in a homely way, putting the thing plainly for your thinking over quiet, by yourself, I will say, you have three, and me similarly nine; and both being unincumbered, why not make one extra large table out of your medium and my full-sized?" Which table, Loosha parenthetically observed, would ultimately prove her death-bed.

We tried to soothe the aggrieved handmaid by every means in our power. Being within three days of Christmas Day, and having purposed to entertain the representative members of our respective families—between whom, all the year round, great enmity exists—at a social dinner, the prospect before us was overshadowed by Loosha's grief. If matters came to a crisis she would, as like as not, take to her bed and remain there for two days. At the end of her period of sackcloth and ashes, she would, we knew by previous experience, reappear as fresh as paint and quite reconciled to the dispositions of fate. But, in the mean while, what would become of us? I tried to argue. I reminded Loosha that her mother was still young, active, and industrious; and that one could not, while deploring the act of Mr. Brown, revile him for his choice of a successor to the departed; that that successor might be called, even now, a pretty woman; and that men would

be men, no matter how foolish it was. I would have continued in this strain, but that Loosha became hysterical.

"She ain't young!" she screamed; "with me twenty-three, how could she? And she ain't pretty; or, if she is, she ought to be ashamed of herself! And both my father, an' Emmeline and Elfred's father, would say so if they was here! And if she does it—which at her time of life is a disgrace—I shall drown myself!"

Then she went into hysterics, and drummed the floor with her heels and the back of a chair with her head, in quite an alarming manner; and I was ordered out of the kitchen that she might be unfastened and the inevitable remediants applied.

That was three days before Christmas. We have got over the dinner and the meeting of the clans without any casualties, other than those we were bound to expect. And Loosha is preternaturally bright, sharp, tight, and brisk. As she goes about her work, she sings. "Come Buy My Colored Errin" is a favorite vocal exercise with her. But it has been superseded by "Take Back the Art." And, from the piquantly expressive meaning Loosha infuses into the opening lines, it is plain that she applies them to Mr. Brown, whose addresses have been discouraged, and whose matrimonial plans have been circumvented, thanks to the prompt action taken by Loosha in the matter. It may be mentioned that our handmaid's baptismal appellation was originally derived from a popular novel, called "Loosha of Lam Her More," and read by mother in her youth. Mother is quite a literary person, having worked for several authors, one of whom was a poetical genius attached to a well-known firm of soap-makers.

Loosha's mother, like many small, meek-looking people, possesses a considerable amount of determination. If she really entertained a weakness for Mr. Brown, that weakness was not to be put down with the strong arm. Loosha realized that, she tells us, as she stood on the kitchen-floor, and met those black beady eyes, so like her own. True, she opened no parallels, but dashed

upon her subject in a way peculiarly distinctive. Emmeline and Elfred, seated on two chairs against the wall, paused in their consumption of bread and treacle on hearing themselves alluded to as poor lambs, and joined their lamentations to sister Loosha's. The tumult raged high, though Mrs. Hemmans preserved a calm, even stony, demeanor. And in the middle of it all, That There Brown knocked at the door.

No quick-change artist ever effected a more wondrous transformation than did Loosha in that minute. Mrs. Hemmans had glided away to put her cap straight and smooth her sleek parting. In the interval between her disappearance and her return, Loosha and Mr. Brown had become quite friendly. Brown's manner was very fatherly, and his features shone with smiles and gin and water. He had been screwing up his courage with that fortifying beverage. Loosha, as she sent the astonished Emmeline out for a quartern of the best, and provided the visitor with a reliable chair, made up her mind that the doom of That There Brown, matrimonially speaking, was sealed. Mother, without knowing why, felt uncomfortable when the widowed joiner proposed taking the entire family (it was Loosha's day out) to the World's Fair, and Loosha warmly responded to the overture. They took Emmeline and Elfred and the Islington bus, and That There Brown and Loosha occupied a garden-chair seat together outside, mother and the children being stowed in the interior of the vehicle. Brown was fatherly when they started; Portland Road found him affectionate. By the time they were launched amid the giddy delights of the fair, he was beginning to think——! Deluded wretch! What matters it what he thought! It was deliberately done of Loosha, the betraying of That There Brown. He wandered with the mother and daughter, each on an arm, through a fairyland of mingled fog and gaslight. They visited the birds, the beasts, and reptiles; and Loosha appealed to him for information as to their names, species, and general habitat, and greeted every remark of his with admiring "Lors!" She never

seemed to notice when he mixed up the Bactrian camel with the water-buffalo. She went upon the circular switch-back with him—mother being too timid to venture—and became nervous in the middle of the airy journey, clinging to the arm of the ravished widower with feminine squeaks of terror. How enthralled she was by his performance on the try-your-strength machine, though the marker on the dial indicated nothing much in the way of a record. The more fascinating Loosha became, the warmer and more perspiring became That There Brown. He nudged her frequently. All the sensation of his corporeal frame seemed to have taken up its abode in the elbow to which she hung. The widow was a dead weight on the other. He and Loosha got lost for a moment in the Channel Tunnel.

Was it then that the miserable man uttered the words which sealed his fate? It may have been. All we know for certain is that, those words once uttered, Loosha's manner became distant and off-hand. That There Brown put it down to maiden coyness, and renewed the siege with redoubled rashness. It was when the Flying Demons were about to take their marvelous leap through space, and the popular attention was uniformly diverted to the ceiling, that Mrs. Hemmans—who was not without a consciousness that for a suitor trembling on the brink of acceptance Mr. Brown's conduct was, to say the least of it, inadequate—felt a tug at her shawl. It came from the infant Emmeline, whose watchful eye, unchildlike in its keen appreciation of the situation, had detected the joiner's arm in the act of inclosing the figure of Loosha under the shadow of her bead-fringed mantle. After that the widow was taken faintish, and had to be revived with peppermint-drops ere the company returned to Brompton. Mr. Brown was not invited in to tea, though he lingered long upon the door-step. And when he had gone Loosha uncorked the vials of her contempt, and told her parent that she had been nursing an addick in her bosom; but, thank God, it was unmasked at last!

Next morning, a procession of four started for the

cemetery. Emmeline and Elfred walked in front, hand in hand and bearing votive garlands. In the presence of the head-stone on which the virtues of her Second were recorded, Mrs. Hemmans renewed her vows of faithful widowhood. On the way back, the party encountered That There Brown.

"Mother just 'ung her 'ed," said Loosha afterward, "and walked by him without taking no more notice than if he was dirt. But he spreads 'isself out over the path, and sezee: 'Don't you reckonize your friends, Mrs. Hemmans, mum, at this time o' day, after all as has been said between us?' And then I pushes in, an' he looks up and met my eye. I give 'im a cold stare, and you might see 'im shrink, as if 'e knowed what was comin'. 'Begging your pardon,' I says, 'but did you mean me or my mother?' 'Your mother,' says That There Brown, 'as I think and 'ope will make a good wife to me and mother to my nine children.' 'Which you was of a different opinion yesterday,' I sharps back on 'im, 'when you ast me to marry you at the World's Fair. Per'aps you'd like to 'ave us both, as the Salt Lake City Morgans ain't too particular in that way, and you may belong to the English branch of the dinomagation.' 'You've been and raised a nornick's nest about my yeers, you cat!' says That There Brown, with a scowl. 'Maria,' and he looked imploring-like at mother, 'the 'uman 'art is impulshuous, especial when led away by gin and water. Overlook the accidence and you won't have no reason to complain.' 'I could never 'ave no reliance on you, Mr. Brown,' says mother, with her eyes cast down, and speakin' as if she'd got pins in her mouth, 'after what has took place.' 'So make your mind up to it,' I says, 'as neither me nor my mother ain't going to be no wife to you nor mother to your nine children, neither.' And he took and hooked it, did That There Brown."

Nearly every eccentric character has his or her "stocking," or "tea-pot," in which hard-earned savings are thriftily put away; but alas! the depository of "Miss Pernickity" was neither so long nor so deep as every reader will wish that it had been. Her pathetic little story was written by Acton Davies for the *Waverly Magazine.*

"MISS PERNICKITY."

"It is a strange thing. Sometimes when I'm quite alone, sitting in my room with my eyes closed, or walking over the hills, the people I've seen and known, if it's only been for a few days, are brought before me and I hear their voices and see them look and move almost plainer than I ever did when they were really with me so as I could touch them."—GEORGE ELIOT.

IT wasn't her real name, of course—that was Smith. But Soubrette had one day laughingly called her "Miss Pernickity," and so admirably did the nickname suit her prim little person that we—the Artist, the Author and the Auctioneer, her fellow boarders—adopted it then and there; and Miss Pernickity she remained to the end of the chapter.

She was a wee little body, scarcely coming up to Soubrette's shoulder, and she was by no means tall; but upon those rare occasions when she saw fit to assert herself, Miss Pernickity had a manner of drawing herself up and gazing disdainfully down upon the world in general that a duchess could not have rivalled. What her age was none of us could guess; past forty, probably, for although there was still a faint bloom on her cheeks, crow's feet were evident, and her once brown hair was heavily streaked with gray.

There were lots of other boarders at Number Fifteen, for the fame of our landlady's table had extended to all sides of the square; but we four and Miss Pernickity formed a little coterie of our own, and while always maintaining a bowing acquaintance with the balance of the household, kept ourselves to ourselves in a great

measure. She had been in possession of the second floor front for some time before the rest of us put in an appearance, and, apart from her thoroughbred bearing and prim, old-fashioned manners, it was the air of mystery, surrounding her like a halo, that first attracted our attention.

No sooner had our trunks been moved in than Soubrette waylaid the landlady, and by a means peculiarly her own elicited information with regard to the boarders in general and our end of the table in particular. Presently she burst into the room which was to be the common property of myself and her brother, the Auctioneer, fairly bristling with gossipy tidings.

"Boys," she cried, throwing herself into our solitary arm-chair, "what do you think? Where's Dick?" Dick was the Author, whom we had just despatched to purchase a package of tacks. "He needn't search any longer for an idea. Here's one he can study as he sips his coffee at breakfast, and enlarge upon while he is waiting for his soup to cool at dinner. That sweet little lady who sits opposite me—you noticed her? Well, she's the mystery, and an impenetrable one at that. Her name is Smith; that's prosaic enough, I'm sure, and probably won't take Dick's fancy. But there's nothing prosaic about her. She's an awfully odd little creature—screw loose somewhere, you know, but impossible to state just where; very exclusive, knows no one but that old Spanish lady with the eyeglass; never goes out, has a dog and a parrot—its name is Perkin Warbeck—never receives any visitors, and she always pays her board bill in big silver dollars, and where they come from goodness only knows, for she never draws a check and hasn't received a letter since she's been here. She doesn't believe in greenbacks, won't have anything to do with them, in fact; and when the servants do errands for her and there happens to be any change—no matter whether it's cents, dimes or half-dollar pieces—she either makes them keep it or else throws it into the waste basket. Did you ever hear of such a thing? I *must* get acquainted with her!

I shall lay siege to her heart this very night, and bring all my wiles to bear—just see if I don't!"

And the little witch proved true to her word; what is more, so successfully did she storm the citadel that within three days' time not only was she fully installed in the quaint little woman's affections, but she had even gained marked favor in the eyes of Perkin Warbeck and the poodle. And just a week later she burst into our room holding aloft in triumph a willow basket decorated with many colored ribbons, which she hastened to inform us was in future to be known as Miss Pernickity's money box.

"I've found out where she hides her money," she exclaimed. "It's in one of her stockings which she keeps hanging in her closet among her old dresses. She has promised me not to throw any more of her small change away, but to drop it into this instead. There's a slit in the cover, you see, and just look at this sweet little padlock! I am to keep the key of it, you know, and—well, we shall see what we shall see!"

And off she scampered to Miss Pernickity's room where, on the hearth-rug, with her little feet tucked under her, tailor fashion, she began to con over her part in the new burlesque.

My own introduction to Miss Pernickity was brought about in an entirely different manner. I was coming down stairs rather early, one morning, making as little noise as possible, so as not to disturb the household, when the door at the other end of the passage was opened cautiously, and Miss Pernickity, holding a tooth-brush in her hand, came toward me on tiptoe.

"Pardon me, sir," she said with a gracious little bow, "but have either you or your friend such a thing as a piece of plain brown Windsor? I have other soap, but for my purpose brown Windsor is imperatively necessary, and my cake has been mislaid. It's for Perkin Warbeck, you know."

Much amused and not a little mystified, I hurried in search of the desired brand of soap. Luckily I found a cake. She thanked me for it most profusely, and

then asked if I would mind coming in and lending her a little assistance, as Perkin Warbeck was sometimes inclined to be obstreperous while undergoing this course of chastisement.

She led the way into her apartment, the windows of which were wide open, and the jingle of the street cars scurrying along the avenue, and the twitter of the birds in the park trees, was borne in upon us. It was the oddest room for a boarding house that ever I saw. On the mantelpiece stood two bouquets of waxen flowers under a glass case, and above them an execrable chromo, all unmistakably of the boarding-house, boarding-housey. But in one corner a great old "grandfather's clock" was ticking away as solemnly and with as great an air of importance as it had ever ticked in the fine old hall from whence it came originally; and there were brackets with cups and saucers and china of all sorts upon them which, one could see at a glance, were really valuable. These, and the little book-case with its rows of well-thumbed volumes, were Miss Pernickity's private property.

"I cannot understand Perkin Warbeck at all lately," she began, advancing to the table upon which, in his gilded cage, the delinquent was confined. "As a rule he is exceedingly genteel, far above the ordinary run of parrots. But during the last few days really his vocabulary has been increasing at a most alarming rate. And such expressions! Where, now, I ask you, sir, in confidence, could he have picked them up?"

Our bedroom and Miss Pernickity's adjoined, and suddenly it flashed upon me that certain high words and rather boisterous songs which, in the privacy of our sanctum, we and a few kindred spirits had indulged in a night or two previous, might in some measure be responsible for Warbeck's sudden fluency. But I kept my own counsel upon this score, merely remarking that parrots in their youth were not unfrequently thrown into rather mixed company, and were then quite often known to absorb phrases which they might not see fit to utilize verbally for a long time—even years afterwards.

"Ah, yes, true enough," she replied. "But that is not the case with Perkin Warbeck. To be sure I did buy him from a sailor; but before doing so I was most particular to inquire about his antecedents, and the sailor assured me that his mother, apart from being the most exemplary of birds, had been reared in the royal aviary of Brazil. So you see that his pedigree is quite above reproach; besides," she added sagely, "if in those days he had picked up such expressions, he would naturally have given vent to them in his mother tongue. But the words he made use of were unmistakably English—Billingsgate, in fact."

"But," suggested I, "might he not have picked them up aboard ship? A sailor's vernacular is not over choice, you know."

"So I have been told," she answered, "and I made that very remark to the man from whom I bought him. He was quite honest about it, and admitted that it was perfectly true. But he assured me that I need have no fear on that score as far as Perkin Warbeck was concerned, for from the day they set sail from Rio Janeiro the bird had been under his personal supervision, and, fearing that it might possibly pick up low expressions, throughout the entire voyage he had kept its ears stuffed with cotton wool. No," she sighed, gazing mournfully at the subject of her discourse, who seemed in no measure cast down by his transgressions, "I'm afraid it's a case of heredity from his father's side of the family. I dare say it runs in the blood. But he must be punished, nevertheless."

Thereupon, without further parley, the tooth-brush having been liberally coated with brown Windsor, Warbeck's beak underwent a thorough cleansing—not, however, without sundry squeaks, splutterings and wing-flaps upon his part.

"Yes," she exclaimed, sinking into a low rocking-chair, "I must confess that Perkin Warbeck is the one thorn in my flesh—the one active thorn, you know. Of course we all have our passive thorns—old wounds which come agape now and then. But Warbeck is

always doing something so exasperating. And then as for stubbornness—oh, my dear sir, you have no idea what a stubborn disposition his is. Do you know that for the last two years I have been trying to teach him to say 'amen' at our family prayers, and he positively refuses to do it! One night he even got as near to it as 'ah there!' but not a syllable nearer will he go. Anything but that I can teach him in a day or two. Now Skit-a-wah-boo"—pointing to the little poodle that was sunning himself by the window—"is so different. He is such a reverential little creature, always puts his head down and behaves like a parish beadle."

"Skit-a-wah-boo!" I exclaimed, only too delighted to grasp this opportunity of exhibiting my knowledge of the Indian tongue. "Why, that's the Indian word for whiskey, is it not?"

"Yes; it was the major called him that," she answered; and her eyes strayed to a little portrait which stood upon the mantelpiece—the portrait of a gentleman in English regimentals. "I thought it scarcely a nice name myself; I feared it might prove demoralizing, you know. But," she added quite seriously, "he always wears a blue ribbon as an antidote."

When I gave the other fellows an account of my interview they lost no time in making the acquaintance of my eccentric little friend. Before long her room became a general rendezvous for us late in the afternoon. First one of us would drop in, and then another, until all our little circle had gathered there, when she would make tea for us in the quaint old tea-cups, and we on our part would recount to her the day's doings. But as a rule she took very little interest in what was going on outside. The Park represented her little world, and she never tired of sitting by the window with Skit-a-wah-boo in her lap, watching the children at play there, and the great clocks of St. George's on the far side of the square.

Coming in one rainy afternoon and finding her sitting thus, I remarked that the faces of those great dials must seem to her quite like old friends.

"Friends!" she exclaimed. "Oh, dear me, no! Acquaintances, if you like, for I must confess that they afford us a great deal of amusement. Skit-a-wah-boo and I quite frequently take bets as to which of them will make the hour first. Sometimes it's really very exciting; but do you know, it's a most singular thing, no matter how far ahead the one may seem to be of the other at the half hour, they invariably come in a tie. Oh, yes, they certainly do help us to pass the time, but I should never dream of calling them friends for all that. With me, you know, not only is cleanliness next to godliness, but it is the first rudiment of friendship. Upon closer inspection I am sure that I should find them cobwebby; for just think, my dear sir, what an age it must be since either of them has had its face washed."

She was a most immaculate little body, dust being her particular aversion, and the early hours of each morning she devoted to a most thorough "cleaning up" of her apartment, which under no circumstances whatever would she allow the housemaids to touch; and such a funny little figure as she cut when, armed with her mammoth duster, her head enveloped in a spotlessly white towel and her skirts just sufficiently tucked up to exhibit the least suspicion of red flannel petticoat!

As time went on, we grew more and more friendly; somehow the quaint little lady crept into all our hearts. Throughout the wear and tear of a day down town the auctioneer would look forward to that quiet half hour before the dinner bell rang when Miss Pernickity was at home; the author would bring his manuscripts to read to her almost before the ink was dry upon the pages; while often on clear mornings I would carry my easel into her room and keep her company.

As for Soubrette—well, now that the times have changed so, and her name, which in those days did not even appear upon the play-bills, so small was the part she played, now holds the place of honor, and that winsome little face, with all its fleeting expressions, its lights and shades, which I used to strive so vainly to

depict upon canvas, is displayed in every shop window and can be bought for a mere song—seeing all this, and hearing the idle rumors and newspaper gossip with which every actress is assailed, I think of how, if Miss Pernickity were here, she would laugh every tidbit of scandal to scorn, and call her "my child" still, just as she used to do in the old days.

"What a dear, bright little sunbeam she is!" she exclaimed, one day, as Soubrette hurried off to a rehearsal. "You have no idea of how that child has twined herself around my heart. And yet she tells me that she is a ballet girl, and dances in short skirts. I was brought up to think of an actress quite as a thing apart—a person whose business it was at all times to look pretty and to amuse her audience for two hours and a half each night. As for her private life—well, that was usually taken for granted. But if there are many of them like her——" She stopped, and, catching sight of Soubrette's little figure hurrying across the Park, she kissed her hand to her, then remarked, "I never need Lamentations now."

"And who, pray, is Lamentations?" I asked.

"Oh, haven't you made his acquaintance yet?"

She went to her bureau and brought forth a small bundle wrapped up in an old silk handkerchief, scented with sprigs of lavender, which upon opening disclosed the skin of a remarkably handsome Angora cat.

"This was Lamentations," she explained with a deep sigh, spreading it out very carefully upon her lap and stroking the fur. "He died young. The Major gave him to me, you know, and I used to call him and Skit-a-wah-boo my twins. When he died I had his skin preserved, as you see; and when I get very lonely and blue, I like to spread it out on my lap for a little while, and then, you know, I have only to shut my eyes and I can imagine that he is here in the flesh. I enjoy it because it brings back the old times, but it makes Skit-a-wah-boo dreadfully jealous."

Here was my opportunity. Notwithstanding her intimacy with us all, and the love she bore Soubrette,

upon the subject of her previous life, her family and home, she maintained a complete silence. It was only by such chance remarks as this that we could gain any clew to her past.

"And the Major?" I inquired, suddenly looking up. "Was he a great friend of yours?"

She did not reply for a moment, but seemed to be weighing her words. A look crept into her face that I had never seen there before.

"No," she said at last, softly, "we were more than friends, we were—sweethearts."

"And is he dead?"

She had been gazing at the portrait with a wonderful look of tenderness in her great brown eyes, but as I put the last question to her, she turned away quickly with a bitter little laugh.

"That depends entirely on how you look at it. To me—yes, he is dead; but to the world in general, to his children, to—his wife—he still lives and breathes and has his being, I believe. But come, let me look at that picture of yours. Ah, yes, that is very, very pretty—admirable!"

And that was all that we ever learned of her past. I have often blamed myself since that I did not make greater efforts to discover who she really was and from whence she came. But she was one of those women who with all their kindness of heart and geniality will brook no interference; and I am now fully convinced that, except when some familiar article or chance remark recalled her old life to her, she was quite oblivious to it—had forgotten it, in fact.

One December morning Soubrette came to me with a very long face.

"I don't know what's to be done," she said. "Miss Pernickity's funds are getting awfully low. All the money she has in the world is in that stocking, and she has got almost down to the toe. And she takes it as calmly as can be; she hasn't the least idea of the value of money. I have little more than $7 in the money-box. I'll change that into silver dollars and slip them

into the stocking. But that won't last forever, and afterward—oh, Jack, I can't bear to think of it!" She dried her face in her hands and wept bitterly.

Well, of course, we at once called a family council, and though we saw no possible means of accomplishing it—for in those days none of us were sufficiently well off to bear the additional expense, and even among the four it would have proved almost more than we could manage—we one and all vowed that, as long as Miss Pernickity cared to occupy it, the "second floor front" should be at her disposal, and we immediately set to work to do what we could toward carrying out our plan. The author, who, by the way, was something of a realist, cast his pet theories to the four winds of heaven, and concocted a tale so gory that it was promptly accepted and handsomely paid for by the Sunday *Venus*; the auctioneer devoted his Saturday afternoons for a whole month to the good cause, tendering his services to private families at a slight discount on regular rates; I painted a picture, which, sad to relate! failed to find a purchaser; and Soubrette, although from her own slender earnings her contributions were perforce but small, told the whole story so pathetically to a bevy of her companions, one night, behind the scenes, that there was a collection taken up on the spot, the leading lady, who had been standing within earshot, heading the list with an amount which by itself would have insured the room to Miss Pernickity for at least two months to come. And she was ably seconded by the premiere danseuse, who, before continuing her performance found it necessary to have her "make up" retouched about the eyes. Even the heavy villain seemed moved by her recital.

And so it came about that the stocking received such a liberal reimbursement that it once more became quite bulky in appearance.

The winter passed quickly and happily, and before we knew it spring was once more here, and our little circle was shaken to its depths by the news that Miss Pernickity was going away. In vain we expostulated,

urged, entreated; even to Soubrette she turned a deaf ear. It was imperative that she should go, she said; Skit-a-wah-boo had been ailing for some months past, and Perkin Warbeck was decidedly under the weather. City life, with its constant rush and whirl, had proved too much for them; they would all be the better for a change of air; that was all they needed—change of air. They would go away to some quiet spot for a month or so, and then they would come back to us—oh, most assuredly they would come back to us! But where she was going she would not say; in fact, up to the night previous to her departure she told us that her plans were not quite settled as yet; and she had her trunks marked simply, "Miss Smith—To be called for."

Soubrette was literally in despair. Miss Pernickity was to leave some time on Saturday, but she had not decided at what hour. All of us expected to be unusually busy that day, Soubrette especially, who between a rehearsal in the morning and the matinee performance almost immediately afterward would not have a free moment until almost dinner time; so we had arranged that one of the servants should see her on board the train and discover her destination.

Late on Friday evening we went up to bid her goodbye. The room looked strange and bare to us, for most of her knick-knacks had been laid away; but the "grandfather's clock" still ticked solemnly in the corner. Miss Pernickity was at work on a cover for Warbeck's cage as we entered.

"Oh, I am so delighted that you have come!" she exclaimed. "But why were you not here ten minutes ago? At last—at last he has actually done it! Perkin Warbeck has said Amen!"

Great were our congratulations upon this triumph of long-suffering perseverance over unmitigated stubbornness, and so elated did Miss Pernickity become that she declared she almost felt induced to read prayers over again, so that Perkin might have an opportunity of exhibiting his fluency in public.

Then—well none of us ever knew just how it was

brought about—but presently we found ourselves upon our knees, and Soubrette in her fresh, young voice was offering up a prayer to heaven that Miss Pernickity might be safely guarded through the perils of her journey and soon brought back to us again. It was a simple, rather clumsily-worded little prayer, and there was a grammatical error in it; but it came straight from the heart, and though Perkin Warbeck refused to indorse it with his newly-acquired word, our response to it was none the less fervent, and there were tears in our eyes as we bade Miss Pernickity good-bye and left the two women together.

When I came home about five o'clock the next afternoon I found Soubrette awaiting me at the foot of the stairs. She looked very pale, and her hands were trembling.

"Is that you, Jack? Oh, I'm so glad! I've been waiting a perfect age for one of you to come in. It's so strange about Miss Pernickity. She has not gone yet, the servants say; but when I knocked just now I got no answer. You don't think—oh, Jack, supposing——"

She broke off suddenly, but I read the rest of the sentence in her startled eyes. I took her hand within my own, and we went to the door and knocked. Then, as I received no answer, I turned the handle and looked in.

The windows were wide open, and the jingle of the street-car bells was borne in to us as on that April day a year ago when I had first made her acquaintance. Only then it was early morning; the sun was rising, and children's voices had mingled with the outdoor clamor; but although many pedestrians, homeward bound, were now hurrying through the Park, there was but one little child in sight. It lay fast asleep on one of the benches, and its doll had fallen to the ground; and between the gaunt towers of St. George's there was a ruddy flush, telling of sunset.

There were the trunks ready corded and labelled; on the table stood the bird cage, enveloped in its new covering; and there in the arm-chair by the window

sat Miss Pernickity. She had her little black bonnet on, and her old-fashioned, wide-sleeved cloak. A breeze blew in upon her and coquetted with one of her prim little curls. One hand rested caressingly upon "Lamentations" in her lap, and in the other she held the end of Skit-a-wah-boo's chain, while he lay on the window-sill dozing. And Miss Pernickity—she, too, slept; but hers was the sleep that knows no waking here on earth.

Soubrette was at her side in an instant; and my footsteps, as I crossed the floor to draw the curtains, roused Perkin Warbeck from his revery. He sullenly flapped his wings, then shrieked querulously forth:

"Amen!"

This clever theatrical story is from the pen of the great apostle of romance, Alexander Dumas. It has been translated for our magazine by Ralph Edmunds.

WHO WROTE THE PLAY?

In the winter of 1788–89 a gentleman of middle age was nearly knocked down on the Pont Neuf by a horse driven by Mlle. Contat, the piquant soubrette of the Comédie Française.

"Sir," the actress said, sharply pulling up, "what do you mean by running against my horse in this manner?"

"I beg your pardon, madame," was the reply, "but I really think the horse ran against me."

"Impossible, sir," rejoined the actress.

"Then, madame," said the unfortunate gentleman, "perhaps you will confess we were both in fault."

"No, sir," said the lady, "I will confess nothing of the sort. My horse is under perfect control. Besides, I called '*Gare!*' and you never looked around."

"Truly, madame," remarked her opponent gracefully, "you have more need to say '*Gare!*' now, when I do look around. The danger is in looking at you."

Not long after this, while wondering who the stranger was, the actress received the following note:

"The gentleman who lately had the honor of a moment's conversation with the modern Thalia on the Pont Neuf, requests to know whether she can devote a leisure hour to the rehearsal of a piece in two acts, about to be produced at the Comédie Italienne, in which the writer of this note is greatly interested.

HENRY."

Henry? Nobody knew M. Henry. Determined to clear up the mystery, Mlle. Contat repaired to the Comédie Italienne, and inquired for the name of the two-act piece in rehearsal. She was told that there were several two-act pieces in preparation.

"But," said the actress, "which of them is written by M. Henry?"

"None," was the reply.

Dezède, the composer, here appeared.

"Ah, madame," he said with a bow, "I have a most particular favor to request. I want you to assist us in the rehearsal of a first act."

"The author of your piece is named Henry?" asked the actress.

"No, madame, that is not his name."

"Is he not very good-looking?"

"Very."

"He has fine eyes, an open countenance and a military air?"

"He has."

"The very man," said Mademoiselle.

"But is this his first production?" she continued. "He is not very young for a beginner. He must be between fifty and sixty."

"Oh, no," replied Dezède, "he cannot be more than five-and-thirty."

"Nonsense," said Mademoiselle, "I would lay you a wager he is nearly sixty."

"Well, madame," said Dezède, "I will not dispute the point. But if he is as old as you say, he certainly disguises his age admirably. Here he comes."

As the composer spoke, a gentleman a little over thirty years of age entered. He is described as "a person of elegant air and figure, with a handsome and intellectual countenance."

"*Ma foi!*" exclaimed Contat, "I find I must give some explanation of my conduct. If it be not strictly decorous for a lady to go in search of a gentleman, what will be thought of a principal actress of the Théâtre Français going in quest of an author?" And with a smile she produced the note signed "Henry," which was passed from hand to hand. As soon as the stranger caught sight of it, he uttered an exclamation of joy.

"Henry," he ejaculated with some emotion, "ever kind, noble and generous."

"And to me ever unknown," said Contat, in a tone of playful indifference.

"Unknown!" cried the stranger in surprise, "why, all the world knows him."

"Nay, sir," said the actress, "there is at least one person in the world who is not in the secret. That one is myself. For pity's sake, do tell me who he is, or I shall die of curiosity."

"Is it possible, madame," said the stranger, "that you are not aware that this note is written by Prince Henry of Prussia?"

"The brother of Frederick the Great?"

"The same—Count Oels."

"I breathe again," said the actress. "It is well he is the brother of a king, and a hero into the bargain. I pardon him for the sake of the *coup de théâtre.*"

"And for the sake of his recommendation, madame," resumed the author, "I venture to hope that you will favor me." Then, drawing Mlle. Contat aside, he explained the nature of his position.

Les Deux Pages ("The Two Pages"), the piece in question, was intended as a tribute to the memory of Frederick, and like the *Partie de Chase de Henri IV.* ("The Hunting Party of Henry IV."), was of the anecdotical class. The chief incident had an historical foundation. The conqueror of Silesia one day rang his bell, but no one answered it. He opened the door of the apartment, and saw his page fast asleep in an armchair, and a note protruding from his pocket. The King softly drew out the letter and read it. It was from the youth's mother, acknowledging the receipt of a portion of his salary, which he had sent to relieve her necessities, and invoking a blessing upon his head. The King replaced the letter in the page's pocket with a purse of ducats, went back to his apartments, and rang the bell sharply. In another moment the page presented himself.

"Have you been sleeping?" asked the King sternly, "I have rung the bell twice."

The page endeavored to excuse himself. In his em-

barrassment he happened to put his hand into his pocket, and mechanically drew out the purse.

"Ah, sire!" he exclaimed, dropping on his knees, "somebody is conspiring to ruin me. I know nothing of this purse."

"No matter, my good lad," said the King. "Heaven often sends us good fortune in our sleep. Forward the purse to your mother with my regards, and tell her that I will provide for her as well as you."

It was upon this incident that the piece was founded. The other page was a light-hearted youth, created for the sake of dramatic contrast. *Les Deux Pages* was in two acts; the first showing the persecution to which the mother and sister are subjected at an inn near Berlin by an unfeeling creditor. The hostess of the inn was pretty and piquant. Madame Dugazon, however, had refused the part as beneath her talents, and the actress to whom it had been intrusted would not be able to play it well. Now, if the first act were not well performed, the piece was doomed, and the author hoped that Mlle. Contat would hear a rehearsal and try to induce Madame Dugazon to represent the hostess.

"Well," said the actress when he had finished, "what victories has Prince Henry won?"

The author, not a little astonished at the question, mentioned Breslau, Dresden, Torgau, Kolin, Prague and Bohemia.

"Well," resumed Contat, "all these are nothing in comparison with the battles which must be fought at the Comédie Italienne to attain the object which the Prince desires. The attempt to take a part from an actress who has possession of it, and force it back upon one who has rejected it, is a bold enterprise, demanding a degree of courage and good generalship worthy of Prince Henry himself. But, unfortunately, it is impossible."

"In this case," said the author, deeply disappointed, "I have no alternative but to withdraw the play."

"Stay," said the actress, "let us have the rehearsal. Perhaps something may be suggested."

The rehearsal was accordingly begun. Mlle. Contat listened with attention, but in silence. The author, anxious to discover her thoughts, earnestly watched her face, but to no purpose. At the close of the rehearsal he advanced to her, expecting to hear an unfavorable judgment. But a pleasant surprise was in store for him.

"When you see Prince Henry," she said, "inform him that his wish shall be complied with."

The actress, in fact, had fully appreciated the merits of *Les Deux Pages*, and spared no exertions to have it transferred from the Comédie Italienne to the Comédie Française. This end attained, she resolved that she would play the hostess herself, and that Fleury, then an actor of some standing at the theatre, should have the principal part. The author wished Dugazon to represent the King, but Mlle. Contat, whose word was law, thought Fleury the better man. For some time, however, she contrived to keep him in ignorance of her intentions, with what success we shall presently show. The actor was one day speaking to her in the green room of his professional progress, and expressing a wish to appear in an original part.

"I want," he said, "a character which shall not fall into the line of any of our present generation of actors —which would not bring me into comparison with my betters. A character of such an original cast that the public would be astonished to see me attempt it. A character, in fine, like *Suzanne*, which raised you at once to such well-merited distinction."

"But, remember, Fleury," said the lady, "that I had no objection to the waiting-maid's cap and apron. Your pride would rebel against the footman's livery."

"Well," was the answer, "I do confess I have a strong antipathy to wearing a livery."

"Shall I propose a character for you?"

"With all my heart."

"How would you like to act a prince?"

"I have never been accustomed to fill so high a rank. But still, if that be the only difficulty——"

"Do you think you could command a hundred thousand men?"

"A hundred thousand! There will be many refractory subjects among them, I fear. But with Mlle. Contat's recommendation——"

"Fleury," said the lady, "I suspect you have some idea of what I am going to tell you." He had, and smilingly admitted as much.

"Now, that all is decided," he said, "let me express my gratitude as a friend, and embrace you in my character of King." Fleury kissed her with so much ardor that Dugazon, who was gossipping in a corner with a youth named Joseph Francis Talma, looked around.

"Did anything fall?" he asked slyly.

"Yes, yes," was the jubilant reply. "A bolt has fallen on your head, and a crown on mine."

Les Deux Pages was received two months before the Easter holidays, and consequently Fleury had time to devote much attention to the character. The author himself and an officer in the suite of Prince Henry joined with others in furnishing information. Saint Fal, a comrade, provided him with an excellent portrait of Frederick by Rumberg. His memoirs, from which this story is taken, show how industrious and thoughtful was his study. For two months he sought to imbue himself with the idea that his apartments were at Potsdam, instead of Paris; to go to bed, rise, take his meals, and move and speak in the full persuasion that he was Frederick II. Every morning he equipped himself in the military dress he had ordered, and, seating himself before his looking-glass, endeavored to paint his face to a resemblance of the portrait, for he was fully sensible of the greatness of his opportunity. The character was of an entirely original stamp, as nothing of the kind had previously been attempted.

"It was my task," he says, "to represent a man who had just closed a wonderful career, and on whom the eyes of all Europe had been anxiously fixed. Few things are better calculated to ensure popularity on the stage than an historical name of recent date. If the actor be

capable of embodying even a tolerable resemblance to his model, he establishes in the minds of his audience a sort of association between himself and the eminent person he represents. It is a resurrection which involuntarily creates interest. The stage presentation of a hero dead as it were but yesterday inevitably produces a powerful impression."

At length, in the Easter period, *Les Deux Pages* was brought out. The flower of the Comédie Française was engaged in the representation. The well-known names of Fleury, Contat, Dazincourt, Bellecourt, Raucourt, and Pétit appeared in the cast. Seldom had such an audience assembled in the theatre. The Dukes of Orleans and Nivernois, the literary coteries over which they reigned and several deputies of the States-General were present; while, half-concealed in the box of the Marshal de Beauran, Prince Henry himself was to be seen. In another box sat a man whose immense head and intensely ugly face could not fail to attract notice—Gabriel Honoré de Riquetti, Comte de Mirabeau. The pit presented a formidable array of critical judges.

When the curtain rose, a deep silence fell upon the house. Supported by the combined talents of Dazincourt and Contat, the first act went with great éclat. The latter, we are told, was irresistibly charming. Her beauty, grace and vivacity never produced a more fascinating impression, and her singing (for she was truly a delightful singer) gave full effect to some airs which Dezède had composed for the piece. As *Frederick* entered, the silence became even deeper than before. Dazincourt said that he heard the unfolding of a lady's cambric handkerchief. Shortly afterward, however, the stillness was broken by involuntary applause.

"The sentinels," writes the actor, "presented arms to me, and I cast a scrutinizing glance at their martial attitude. To the sentinel on the left I gave a shrug of dissatisfaction, while I directed to the other a smile, indicating approbation, perhaps a forthcoming reward.

The pit continued unmoved, and I said within myself —my thoughts still directed to the sentinel—'You shall have the cross of merit.' That instant, as though the thought had been a signal, a torrent of applause burst from every part of the theatre. Then, when I turned to speak, silence was again restored, though again frequently interrupted by bursts of approbation, and the curtain eventually fell on a genuine dramatic triumph."

On the following day the author of the play called at the theatre. He cordially embraced Fleury, apologized for having at first felt any want of confidence in his talents, complimented him on his performance with much liberality, and finally handed him a packet from Prince Henry.

"His Highness," he said, "has desired me to present to you this snuff-box, which belonged to the King his brother, for the Prince is of opinion that no one knows better how to use it than yourself. His Highness directs me to assure you that your acting has fully verified an observation of Frederick the Great himself, that 'feeling is the mainspring of every great effort!'"

A beautifully-executed miniature of the King, surrounded with diamonds, adorned the lid. Nevertheless, the actor did not consider his triumph complete. Mirabeau—the terrible M. de Mirabeau—had not applauded his performance. From the commencement to the conclusion he had apparently remained in one fixed position, his elbow on the front of the box and his head on his hand.

"I felt," writes Fleury, "that I would have given all the applause I earned for the suffrage of that one man." But the actor afterward learned that the orator's ill-humor was due, not to disapproval of the performance, but to his being reminded by the play of his *Histoire Secrète de la Cour de Berlin*, and, consequently, there was nothing to mar the triumph.

And who was the author of *Les Deux Pages?* the reader asks, no doubt. I am unable to answer the question. The dramatic biographers have thrown no clear light on the point. Dezède was mentioned at one

time as the author, but it is authoritatively stated that all he did was to compose the music. Grimm assigns the authorship to Saurigné; another writer, to a certain "Manteufel"; and MM. Etienne and Matinville, to Faure. But, according to Fleury, who was necessarily well-informed, but who does not think himself at liberty to disclose the secret, each of these surmises is incorrect. The identity of the dramatist is very uncertain. Indeed, all that we know about him is that he was "a man of high birth and descended from one of the sovereign houses of Europe."

Everybody visits at times places which, in his present body, he knows that he has never visited before, and yet which seem strangely familiar to him. Events happen, which he seems to have lived through before, and yet which he knows to be absolutely new to him. The theosophists and other—is it proper to say, philosophers?—account for these things. Common, every-day people simply accept them, hoping that they will be explained in another world. The commercial traveller in the strange story below might well have been stunned by his appalling experience, even if he had not fallen. It was written by Julian Stuart for the Indianapolis *News*.

A SHADOW CAST BEFORE.

SEVERAL years ago I was traveling in the State of Wisconsin, in the interest of a Southern tobacco factory. At that time the lumbering industry of central Wisconsin was in its infancy, and the now prosperous inland cities, with their immense lumber mills, were mere villages of lumbermen and loggers.

Traveling men were correspondingly scarce. We grew lonesome, and suffered many hardships of which the travelers of to-day know but little. Consequently I was glad to meet so pleasant a companion as John Sturtevant. Like myself, he represented a tobacco firm, but our "brands" were of an entirely different kind; hence we were not competitors, and visited the trade from town to town together.

Sturtevant was my senior by probably ten years—a handsome man, prematurely gray, clean shaven, save for a mustache of a brownish color, which contrasted queerly with his rapidly silvering hair. His clothing was costly, "but not expressed in fancy." He disliked a fop, and was strictly business-like in all his transactions; kept a close guard upon his tongue, but spoke intelligently and to the point when he spoke at all. He was well informed and, in short, a gentleman with whom almost any one would readily have made friends

at the first opportunity he afforded them. He seemed to take quite an interest in me, and I was proud of it and could have assured him, had I chosen, that the interest was reciprocated.

One pleasant summer night, a few weeks after our first meeting, I invited him into my room (just across the hall from his in the little frame hotel). He accepted my invitation. We brought forth our pipes, filled them from our respective "brands," lit them and jokingly expatiated on the qualities and merits possessed by each. Thus we chatted pleasantly of our sales and failures to sell; our plans for the coming week, etc., until at last our conversation turned (upon some remark which I cannot recall, but in the same manner that thousands of conversations have turned before) into the supernatural—dreams especially.

He then related to me the following story, which I give in his own language, as accurately as my memory serves me, and I am positive that I have forgotten no incident connected with it. I might further add that I have no reason whatever to doubt, in the least, its absolute truthfulness.

Laying his pipe on the table near by, he began thus:

"I cannot say, even after the experience I am about to relate, that I place much credence in dreams, this one being the only one I have ever been able to trace to anything like tangibility. I am sure that I am no more superstitious than the average of men, and I have always chosen to attribute the fulfilment of any dream to chance or coincidence rather than to any other cause.

"Fourteen years ago last winter, I was in identically the same position which I now fill, excepting the fact that I am now directing the movements of a few men. You will know, of course, that at that time I was a young man—to be accurate, twenty-three years of age. At the time of which I speak I was on my 'maiden' trip, and, as though to inure me to the trials and hardships of a traveler's life, the house had kept me out almost a year without so much as a twenty-four hours' visit to the city in which my parents resided, and which, for the

lack of any other, my parents being dead, I still claim as my home."

Here he hesitated and passed his hand through his hair. He seemed to be lost in meditation, or in trying to think where he should begin again. Presently he said:

"I will not worry you with the details of a love story, but suffice it to say that this same city was the abode of my sweetheart, Mary, whom I had known in infancy, whom I had loved from childhood, and to whom I had been betrothed for two years. I held close and regular correspondence with her, and her entreaties for me to come home were at times pitiful. However, wishing on this trip, above all others, to convince the firm that they need have no fear of my becoming homesick, I had never asked for leave of absence.

"At last, about the 1st of December, a letter reached me from the house while I was in Alabama, stating that 'after the 10th inst. all traveling agents will be at liberty until Jan. 1,' and wishing us a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Of course, I was extremely well pleased, and mentally calculated that after the day's labor was completed on the 10th I would board the 9 p. m. train for Nashville, and reach home by the morning of the 12th.

"Retiring early on the night of December 6, suffering from no undue mental or physical excitement, I fell into what appeared to me to be a peaceful sleep, in which I dreamed that I stood at the rear entrance of a strange brick house, one which I had never seen in my waking moments, but every exterior detail of which I seemed to note carefully and still remember. Why or how I was supposed to be there, or why I was at the rear door, I do not know, but I was perfectly sure that it was proper to be there, and also equally as sure that this house was Mary's home. I knocked upon the door and was admitted by Mary's sister, who, though it seemed not in the least strange to me expressed but very little concern at seeing me, merely saying, 'Mary is in the front parlor,' and, as persons do in dreams,

disappeared. I was alone. Taking a hasty survey of the room, I noticed that it seemed in disorder, such a disorder as results from moving before articles are placed in their proper positions. I scanned things closely. A pair of lady's shoes sat in the middle of the room, close to the leg of a centre table. A lounge sat in the farther end against one of the curtains, which hung over a folding door, the other curtain being drawn, disclosing a small room, in which the only article of furniture visible through the curtains was a bureau, such as were so much used at that time.

"It is needless for me to mention every object which I seemed to examine in that one brief moment, though I recall everything vividly, even to the carpet, the wall paper, the unhung pictures and their frames; suffice it to say that Mary stood in front of the bureau in the little room, with her long, black hair hanging loosely over her shoulders, while she searched for something in the topmost drawer, in utter ignorance of my presence. I gazed upon her a moment, and called her name. She turned toward me with a look of wildest surprise, which quickly changed to one of joy as she rushed toward me with outstretched arms, crying aloud my name. I advanced toward her. As she threw the curtain farther back, in her wild haste, her foot caught under a rug which lay in the doorway, and she began to fall. I leaped forward and caught her in my arms before she had fallen completely to the floor, raised her gently and placed her upon the lounge, not a yard away.

"Her sister had heard the noise we had made and came running in. Mary did not speak. I did not seem to be excited, and can even remember in the dream having attributed her quiet, as she lay upon the couch, to faintness. Her sister bade me enter an adjoining room to the right, which I did, seeming to know that it was the sister's desire to be alone with her while she prepared her for bed and the treatment necessary to resuscitate her.

"In this other room I began to feel alarmed, and endeavored to allay my fears, as well as to divert my

thoughts, by examining things closely. A door with a broken glass opened out upon a driveway, which seemed to have been newly paved, and which led to the street a few steps away. A civic procession of some kind was passing, at which I gazed intently, at first through the broken door, then stepping out upon the drive. I seemed to have forgotten Mary. I advanced but a few steps, when I slipped upon the icy pavement and fell to the ground. The imaginary fall awoke me with a start. I was much excited, but my nerves soon became quieted and my sleep was normal during the remainder of the night.

"So much for the dream, and now the sequel.

"I arrived home safely and at once inquired about the girls, Mary and her sister, for the dream had made a wonderful impression upon my mind, which grew rather than diminished, as time went by. They were well, but had moved to another portion of the city only a few days before. 'Strange,' thought I; 'I will go at once and find them.'

"I found the house with ease, having been directed by my father. A domestic upon a step-ladder, with a scrub-brush in hand, was engaged in washing the wood work and pane of glass in the transom, and, at the same time, completely obstructing the front passage. I was told to go to the rear door. I did so, and knocked. This was the very house I had seen in my dream, even to the minutest detail. My knock was answered by the sister, who did not greet me with a surplus of cordiality. She informed me that Mary was in the front parlor, and withdrew from the room, without so much as addressing me a dozen words. Even her information concerning Mary was erroneous, as will be seen.

"The room was identically the same one which I have already described as having seen in my dream, even to its disorder, the pair of lady's shoes, the lounge, the curtains, the unhung picture sitting on the floor—everything; I was stricken, bewildered. The dream flashed through my mind like lightning.

"There stood Mary before the old bureau mirror, her

hair hanging loosely over her shoulders. I trembled violently from fright. By a mighty exertion I called her name, which was the first intimation she had of my presence, as she seemed to have entered the little room while I was silently examining my surroundings in the other. She turned, halted a moment, and rushed toward me, calling out, 'Oh, John, John! My dream! My dream!' These were her only words. She was falling. Her face was white as that of a corpse. Impelled by instinct, I ran toward her and caught her in my arms and laid her tenderly upon the couch. The same couch. Her sister entered. My God! I shall never forget the absolute terror which seized me at that moment. I was wild. My awful dream was being enacted in stern reality, and I was one of the helpless, powerless actors. Mary seemed to be unconscious; at least she uttered not a word. The sister motioned me into the other room to the right. I went. I acted like a machine. I seemed to be impelled by some unknown power or influence. My senses seemed to have left me. I wondered if I were not dreaming the dream again and would awake with the fall which I seemed to know would inevitably occur. No; it was real. I even examined the room as I had done in my dream. It was the same. The glass was broken from the door. I looked out. A procession was coming down the street. It was too much; I felt myself growing faint — dizzy. I wanted air. Bareheaded, I rushed out upon the drive and—fell.

"That was all.

"Two weeks afterward, on Christmas Day, I regained consciousness. As I grew stronger, they told me that my Mary was in heaven. She had expired from paralysis of the heart within an hour from the time she had fallen into my arms. They had buried her, and I never saw her face even in death.

"In falling upon the pavement my head had struck upon a projecting stone, causing a fracture of the skull and concussion of the brain, from the effects of which my parents and the physicians had but little hope of my recovery.

"There is not much more to say. I am not versed in the science of dreams, but am informed that it is very, very rare that they 'come true' in every particular as mine did. When I became well, I ascertained the cause of the sister's coldness toward me, which was a rumor concerning me of a purely personal nature, and which I quickly put down. I have always been positive that Mary had experienced a dream similar, in every essential particular, to mine."

With these last words Sturtevant arose abruptly, bade me "good-night," and sought his room. I never mentioned the remarkable story to him again; nor did he ever mention it to me. I have lost track of him completely during the past few years. The last time I heard from him he was still a bachelor, and, if indications are a criterion in such matters, he will probably remain one.

I had his story recalled to me last summer. While in Wisconsin I happened to be in the same town, now grown into a city, in which, years ago, John Sturtevant related to me his strange dream.

The old proverb, "the wise man defiles not any well, because he may yet have to drink of its waters," is well illustrated in this clever story from *Longman's Magazine*. It is said to be largely true.

SIR EDRIC'S PEARL.

PADDINGTON station. A raw chilly morning. A crowded platform, for it is the week before Christmas, and there is much coming and going, notwithstanding the ungenial weather, which is piercingly cold without the exhilaration of frost—so cold and unpleasant, indeed, that every one looks at every one else with a sort of astonishment at "every one else" for being there.

"For myself (or ourselves)," so the look seems to say, "the case is different, I (or we) being obliged to travel for important reasons; but why 'every one else' can not have the common sense to remain at home and at least leave us the station, and the porters, and the hot-water tins, and the most comfortable seats to ourselves, is really inexplicable."

Such, I think, was pretty much the state of mind of a young or youngish woman, ensconced in a first-class compartment and comfortably enveloped in warm rugs and shawls, not to speak of muff, boa, and thickly-lined cloak. She occupied a corner seat; opposite to her sat her husband, and beside him his sister—a plain, but kindly-faced old maid. At this lady's left again, filling the further corner, was the fourth member of the party, a younger man—cousin to his three companions.

It was to his home they were all bound, there to spend Christmas. Possibly by right of his prospective hostship, possibly for other reasons, it was evident that the three persons mentioned treated him with special consideration, approaching deference. And this was particularly noticeable in the case of the married woman of the party.

"So lucky," she remarked, settling herself with complacency in her comfortable corner, "so really delightfully lucky that we should be going down by the same train as you yourself, Teddy. And it's all thanks to me—it was clever of me, now wasn't it, Bernard, to have caught sight of him? Bernard is so absent and Prissy so absurdly near-sighted that they would never have seen you, Teddy."

The repetition of the familiar abbreviation of his Christian name seemed to afford her peculiar satisfaction. In this, and in a faint—the very faintest—suspicion of a tone, rather than accent, not of the very purest quality, the lady, in spite of her rich and, it must be allowed, tasteful attire and undeniable good looks, betrayed that she herself was not altogether to the manor born. And such was the fact—the marriage of Miss Nora Newton, one of the several pretty daughters of a country solicitor, to Mr. Bernard Mallory, a man of good birth and considerable wealth, had been a decided rise in the social scale for the young lady. And such rises are sometimes apt to turn the head—to engender a certain dizziness, a curious loss of the sense of proportion in the subject of them. But Bernard was a sensible man—a man with small social ambition and entirely untouched by snobbishness in any of its insidious forms. Under his influence his wife kept her balance, and gradually, except under unusual provocation, sobered down into a handsome matron of sufficiently well-bred manners. Still, she was spoiled and self-assertive, and not specially good-tempered. And her husband was easy-going—too easy-going—and in ordinary life too yielding. He shut his eyes to many things in Nora which he could have wished otherwise. On the present occasion she was trying him considerably by her exaggeration of friendly intimacy with his cousin, Edric Mallory, the head of the family, recently returned from some years' expatriation in the diplomatic service, and only quite lately introduced to Mrs. Bernard for the first time. "Teddy" he had always been and would always be to his cousins, but to a cousin's wife—"Nora really

might show better taste," thought her husband, with a slight compression of the lips. But Sir Edric took it phi osophically, and gentle Miss Prissy seemed happily unconscious of any failure in taste or tact on her sister-in-law's part, so Bernard let it pass.

Sir Edric Mallory was a person of consequence. This was his first Christmas at home since the family honors devolved on him, and he was full of hospitable intentions. For the sake of the cousin, to whom he was much attached, he put up with the cousin's wife. Thus did it come about that the party of four was traveling down to Mallory Park, greatly to Mrs. Bernard Mallory's delight, there to spend the last days of the year, with the prospect of a pleasantly full house and various festivities in the neighborhood.

"Yes," Sir Edric was replying to his cousin by marriage, in answer to her eager questions, "Oh, yes! there are two or three balls on hand. The Hunt ball at Darting next week is always a good one, and——"

He was interrupted. It wanted yet some few minutes to the time of departure of the train, and Mrs. Mallory looked up irritably as the door opened, letting in a chill draught of air from the outside.

"I hope to goodness no one is coming in upon us," she said. "We are four already. Can't we keep——"

But it was too late. A porter was already standing in the carriage, stowing away various properties in the rack.

"There is plenty of room in here, ma'am," he called back to two ladies on the platform; "two empty seats."

An anxious face peered up through the open doorway.

"Oh, thank you! Yes, I think that will do nicely. Cissy, my dear, I think you will do very well here. You like sitting with your back to the engine?"

"Yes, I do, aunty. Please don't worry about me," replied a second voice—that of a young girl this time, who proceeded, as the porter made his exit, to mount up into the carriage. But she did not settle into her place at once; she leaned out of the window—for the porter by this time had closed the door—for a last word

or two with the first speaker, an elderly woman in a plain, almost dowdy, attire. The colloquy was distinctly audible to those inside.

"I shall be so anxious till I hear of your arrival," said the elderly lady.

"I will write to-night, and please don't be anxious. I am sure after all it was best to come first-class," said the girl.

"And take the middle seat—be sure you do. There is always a draught near the window, and you must not catch another cold."

The girl laughed reassuringly.

"Dear aunty, my last cold was nothing at all. Besides, I am sure Miss Topping would be very good to me if I had a cold. But I will take the middle seat, I promise you."

Then came the last warning voice, "Take your seats, please," and the parting summons, "Tickets," and in another moment the door had received its final bang, and the train was slowly moving out of the station.

But Miss "Cissy" was not yet settled. The porter had deposited her smaller belongings in the corner seat, the center one being quite filled by the property of Mrs. Mallory, overflowing from the lady herself, next door. The girl glanced at her neighbor questioningly.

"This seat is not engaged, I think," she said. "May I move your dressing-bag and the other things to the corner one?"

The request caused Mrs. Mallory's wrath to explode. All this time she had been indulging in semi-"asides" of by no means an amiable character.

"Too bad. Bernard, can't you insist on our having the compartment to ourselves?" "They have no right to keep that door open, I tell you;" or, "I believe they are third-class passengers trying to get in here," were among the mildest of her remarks.

And when the new-comer turned to her with her not unreasonable request, she started almost in horror at the way in which it was received.

"Certainly not. I cannot allow any of my things to

be touched. If you do not like the corner seat, you can change carriages at the next station," said Mrs. Mallory.

The girl's face blanched. For half a moment she wondered if the handsome, prosperous-looking woman beside her was quite in her right mind, and she glanced across at Bernard and his sister with a sort of inquiry. For she had never before in her life traveled alone, and even sensible people's nerves are sometimes affected by the stories of railway adventures so often related.

Then she gazed at Mrs. Mallory with a sort of blank amazement, with a vague expectation that some word of apology would follow her rude speech.

The apology came, but not from Nora.

"Allow me to move the things," said her husband, and the moment the girl heard his voice she knew she had a "gentleman" to deal with. "The center seat is quite as much at your disposal as the other. Nora," in a tone that made his wife start as she seldom did, "be so good as to draw that rug more your way."

Then Cecil spoke. With the quick instinct of regret for having caused annoyance, however unwittingly, inherent in a refined and sensitive nature, she turned to Bernard.

"I am so sorry," she said. "It is only that I promised my aunt to take the middle seat. Oh! really, I am so sorry to disturb you all."

For by this time Miss Prissy, and not Miss Prissy only, but Sir Edric too, had come to her assistance. Miss Prissy was fussily endeavoring to make room for some of her sister-in-law's belongings beside herself; Sir Edric was more successfully transferring them to the corner seat opposite his own. So by degrees things righted themselves—to outward seeming at least. The offended Nora, her cheeks burning with indignation, subsided behind a book; her husband, with the compressed look about his lips which to those who knew him well meant much, turned to his sister with some commonplace remark, to which Miss Prissy replied with nervous eagerness; Sir Edric unfolded a newspaper and leaned back as if absorbed in its contents, though he

skilfully managed from time to time to steal a look from behind its shelter at the young traveler whose advent had created such excitement.

"By Jove," he said to himself, "if I had known that poor Bernard's wife was so utterly ill-bred, I should have thought twice about inviting them to Mallory. Can she not see that the girl is entirely and absolutely a lady? And even if it had not been so——"

But before long he forgot about Nora in the interest with which he furtively watched the occupant of the seat opposite Miss Prissy's. Her young face looked very grave, almost stern, though it was easy to see that such was not its habitual expression, for all the lines were curved and gracious. She was more than pretty. But it was a kind of beauty that was not likely to be done justice to at the first glance. It grew upon you, especially if "you" had good taste and some real notion of what real beauty is. Mrs. Bernard Mallory in her hasty glance at the newcomer had been quite unimpressed, and her amazement would have been great had she known the opinion arrived at by both her husband (for he, too, was noticing the girl) and his cousin as to the charms of the quiet, grave occupant of the center seat.

In her dark, close-fitting, rough tweed dress, Cecil might have been a duchess or a daily governess. It suited Mrs. Mallory to dub her in her own mind the latter; and Bernard, too, from the allusion to going "first-class" which had been overheard, somehow decided that their fellow-traveler was poor.

"All the more unpardonable of Nora to be so rude and ill-natured," he reflected. "I do trust Teddy did not notice it much."

No—at least, whether Sir Edric had noticed it much or not, his thoughts were now elsewhere, more pleasantly engaged. He was looking backward and forward; and to be able to do both these things with a smile on one's face one must be, if not exceedingly young and inexperienced, the owner of several desirable things. A well-balanced mind first and foremost,

perhaps; a conscience on the whole void of offense; an unselfish and healthy nature. And all these were his, and added thereto various material advantages, as I have said, not to be despised.

More, however, was wanting. Edric Mallory was very much alone in the world, and he was affectionate and the reverse of conceited. He longed to be cared for for himself. The smile which had flitted across his face once or twice as he sat there reviewing the past owed its origin to the remembrance of certain youthful experiences when he had been less on his guard than he was now—more ready to believe in disinterested motives—in a word, less worldly wise; the smile that woke up at the vision, vague and dreamy though it was, of a possible future—of the at last lighting on the pearl within the shell—was of a different nature, tender and almost reverent.

Why had such thoughts come to him just then? Was the sight of a sweet girl face, pure and noble in its simple dignity, enough to explain these waking dreams? Edric could almost have laughed aloud at himself.

"I had no idea I was so fantastic and sentimental," he said to himself; "it is really absurd. But—perhaps her face reminds me of some one—or of some picture—it is an uncommon face. I am certain she is a girl of great character as well as sweetness, and she looks so good, so sincere, I can't find the right word. I wonder if she is a governess"—somehow they had all hit on the same idea—"going to her first situation, perhaps. I hope she will be happy. Now if one could get to know a girl like that in a natural simple sort of way, how much surer one would be than meeting girls in the rush of society—dancing and talking small talk, or in the whirl of a great country-house party."

Cecil had taken a book out of her bag, and was reading—quietly and gravely, as she had done everything so far. And Sir Edric had presumed somewhat rashly on the fact that her eyes were cast down—he had been looking at her pretty steadily for a moment or two. Suddenly she glanced up; their eyes met, and her face

flushed deeply. The young man felt inexpressibly annoyed.

"What a set of boors she must think us," he said to himself, as his own color deepened.

But before he had time to consider if by any possible diplomacy he could suggest any excuse for his apparent rudeness, the train slackened, and, glancing out, Sir Edric saw that they were close to the junction where they had to change carriages. The usual little bustle ensued. Bags, rugs, umbrellas and books were collected; Mrs. Mallory's maid presented herself at the door, and was duly loaded; and the young stranger, left behind for a moment, soon got out and followed the stream of passengers down the platform.

Sir Edric was some little way in the rear of Bernard and his wife. A glance had told him that their fellow-traveler was coming after them, though still farther back. She was carrying her small baggage herself with a somewhat perturbed expression—the fact being that in her inexperience she had not hailed a porter quickly enough.

"Poor thing!" thought the young man, annoyed at the impossibility of being able to help her; "she has to consider fees, evidently. If Nora was a kindly-natured woman, she might have——"

But what Nora might have done was lost in what Nora *did* do. Suddenly Sir Edric became aware that his cousin and his wife had turned back and were bearing down upon him, walking very fast, the lady's face flushed and anxious.

"I have lost my purse," she exclaimed, as they drew near him. "Bernard, do hurry on and look in the carriage. Teddy will take care of me."

Mr. Mallory hastened forward.

"It is so provoking," said Nora. "I had a good deal of money in it, and I know I had it in the railway carriage, for I opened it to pay for a Christmas number the newsboy brought to the door. I thought I put it back in my pocket, but—oh! by the by, here is that girl——"

For, as she spoke, they came face to face with Cecil. Mrs. Mallory stopped abruptly.

"I have lost my purse," she said, addressing the young girl without preface or apology; "a small sealskin purse with gilt fittings, and a lot of money in it. You left the carriage after us. I am sure it was on the seat. Did you see it?"

Cecil hesitated. She was startled, and for the first moment scarcely took in the sense of the words.

"A sealskin purse," she repeated slowly in the rather meaningless way one is apt mechanically to repeat what one hears when slightly dazed or confused by a sudden and unexpected demand.

"Yes, I said so—a sealskin purse," Nora repeated, waxing more and more impatient. "Ah! here is Bernard," and for a moment her face lit up with hope, "have you found it?"

He shook his head.

"No, it is positively not there. I looked myself, and the porter looked. It can't be helped. Perhaps you will find it after all among some of your traps."

But Nora was not to be so smoothed down.

"Nonsense," she said. "It is not in my pocket, and that is the only place it could have been in. I did not put it in my bag. I never do. It was on the seat beside me—I am more and more certain of it—the seat this—" and she turned to Cecil, who was still standing there as if, somehow or other, the matter concerned her —"this lady," with a visible hesitation, "took when she moved all my things. And you have not answered me yet," she went on, addressing Cecil again directly; "did you see my purse?"

"No, indeed," the girl replied. "Of course, had I done so, I would have told you at once."

"You said nothing," Mrs. Mallory persisted. "You seemed stupefied. You stood there repeating my words. Now think better of it. You must have seen my purse."

Her voice was rising, so was her temper. The alter-

cation, or what seemed very like one, was beginning to attract the attention of those about them. Miss Prissy murmured, "Oh, Nora, my dear! Oh, don't, Nora!" and seemed on the verge of tears. Sir Edric's eyes flashed fire, and he, as well as Bernard, was on the point of speaking, when Cecil's voice, calm but clear, made itself heard. She was putting immense control on herself.

"I am sorry for you," she said, "because the loss seems to have made you forget yourself, and so I tell you once more that I never saw your purse," and she looked at them all—all four—as if from some unapproachable height, and then walked slowly away toward where, far to the front of the platform on the other side, the train was awaiting its passengers.

"Nora," said her husband between his teeth, "I am utterly ashamed of you."

Sir Edric said nothing.

Half an hour or so later, when they reached their ultimate destination, he saw the girl again. She was walking with another old lady, who had evidently come to meet her—an old lady plainer and dowdier even than her escort to Paddington. They were talking eagerly, but the old woman's face was beaming with smiles and the girl's eyes shone brightly. Evidently she was telling of no disagreeable adventure.

"It scarcely looks as if she were a governess," mused Sir Edric. "At least, if that old party is the mistress of a boarding school, she seems uncommonly kind and jolly. Perhaps, after all, she," with a curious catch in his breath, "is not to be pitied. She deserves to be happy; that I could swear to. But, oh, that woman! I could never venture to look in that girl's face again if I met her every day for a year."

He smothered a sigh, and during the drive from the station to Mallory he was very grave and silent and preoccupied. So much so that he scarcely noticed Nora's defiant allusion to the shameful episode of the journey.

"You saw the sort of woman that came to meet that

girl," she remarked to Miss Prissy. "A regular old dowdy, like a servant. And she kissed the girl. I told you she was not a lady in the least. Such people have no business to travel first-class, as I know to my cost. Such a thing should not be passed over."

But her remarks met with no response.

Cecil's "Miss Topping," the plain-looking, happy-faced old lady who had met her at the station, was a former governess of her mother's. She had known Miss Topping all her life, and loved her dearly. In return, the good lady adored her, and this two-days' visit from the young girl had been her dream for many a day.

"So good of you, so sweet of you, to have come to me, instead of going straight to Darting Priory," she said, as she bade Cecil good-night that evening, having inquired for the twentieth time if there was nothing more she could do to make up for the absence of the maid, for whom there was no accommodation in her tiny dwelling. "You are sure you are comfortable? I can't get over the idea of your having traveled alone for the first time in your life, all to give pleasure to poor me."

"And to myself, dear Miss Topping," said the girl. "I am very glad to be with you."

So she was. There is nothing that makes one more truly happy than to realize that one is giving pleasure to others. And, as she sat there over the cozy fire in her little bed-room, she felt glad to think that she had had the self-control not to relate to her old friend the disagreeable episode in her journey.

"She would have taken it so to heart," thought Cecil, "and after all, what does it matter? That woman was really dreadful—not the least bit of a lady—and yet her husband seemed nice, and the other man was—yes, I think he was nice, too. I don't think he meant to be rude. And the name on the luggage—how did I come to see it?—oh! yes, it was on the dressing bag—seemed a good one. 'Mallory, Mallory Park.' I suppose it is some place near this. I will ask Miss Topping just out of curiosity."

But her face flushed again in spite of herself as she thought of the day's adventure.

"How dare she?" thought Cecil.

She was a little tired, and, in spite of the fire, a little chilly. Her fur-lined cloak was hanging near her. Cecil stretched out her hand to reach it, and in drawing it toward her turned it half upside down. As she did so, something fell with a slight clatter on to the ground.

"Can I have left something in the pocket?" she thought. The cloak had large, rather loose pockets on the outside. She felt inside one. No, it was empty; but—her fingers strayed farther. Some stitches had given way, making a sort of little second pocket below the other, between the layers of the lining. "Whatever it is that dropped out must have been caught in this hole. I wonder what it can be," thought Cecil, her mind rapidly running through the list of her smaller possessions, till, to satisfy herself, she stooped down and began groping on the floor. She had not to grope long. Almost immediately her hand came in contact with a small object, both hard and soft, and, raising it to the light, the astounded girl saw that it was a seal-skin purse—a small sealskin purse of first-rate quality, with gilt fittings, and, as it was easy to feel, well filled to boot.

Cecil's face grew crimson and then terribly white.

"That woman's purse!" she gasped, in unspeakable horror.

How had it come there? Who can tell? Who can tell how these materially extraordinary things do happen—how hooks embed themselves in the wrong places with complications of ingenuity which it would take hours of labor for our clumsy fingers to achieve; how a coin carelessly dropped will seek for itself the one crevice in the parquet floor through which it could descend to the mysterious depths "under the boards," or hide itself beneath the one immovable piece of furniture in the room? How the purse had come there, Cecil could only conjecture. It might have been lying on the arm between the seats, and slipped on to her lap

and thence into her pocket. It might have—but there was no use in thinking how this wretched mischance had come to pass. It was so—that was enough.

Then ensued some minutes of painful reflection. What was to be done? She would not confide in poor Miss Topping and spoil the good lady's day or two of fête—that was certain.

"I will tell mamma all about it when I get home," she decided, unselfishly. "Till then I will bear it alone."

But the purse must be restored to its owner. As to this there was no practical difficulty, for Cecil had seen the address. Should she send it anonymously? No, the girl's whole instincts revolted at the thought.

"I have done nothing wrong, nothing even foolish," she said to herself, "and I will not seem ashamed. I will send it back openly with a note signed by myself."

But how to find a trustworthy messenger without confiding in her hostess? There was the post; but to send money—perhaps a considerable sum—by post Cecil scarcely thought secure.

"I must manage it somehow in the morning," she thought. And then with a resolute determination not to dwell upon the unlucky accident in any exaggerated way, poor Cecil undressed and went to bed—to bed, and after a while to sleep, though her dreams were so uncomfortable and disturbed that when morning came she felt but little rested or refreshed.

Miss Topping was near-sighted, and it was easy to put on sufficient cheerfulness to satisfy her.

"Where is Mallory Park?" Cecil succeeded in asking in an ordinary tone. "Isn't it somewhere near here?"

"Not a quarter of a mile out of the town," said Miss Topping. "The Mallory Road is the prettiest side of Burnham, and the park is a very beautiful place. Perhaps you have met Sir Edric Mallory? No, by the by, that is scarcely likely. He has only lately returned from Japan or somewhere."

Cecil evaded a direct answer, but her thoughts were

busy as her old friend chattered on. Only a quarter of a mile! A sudden resolution seized her.

"I should like to go a little walk this morning," she said. "It is fine and bright, though cold. A walk after a railway journey always does me good."

Miss Topping's face fell.

"This morning, my love? I am so sorry. I thought of lunching early and going out immediately after, but this morning—I promised to stay in to see a servant whom one of my nieces wants to engage. It won't take five minutes, but unluckily I don't know exactly when she will call."

"Then let me go a short walk by myself, and we can have a longer one together after luncheon. No, no, you needn't shake your head. Mamma would not mind in a tiny place like this. Why, it is only a village, really! I shall not be long. It will take away the scrap of headache I have."

She carried her point. An hour later, having well informed herself as to the way she must take, Cecil, in her dark tweed, her face paler than usual, her heart beating fast beneath her calm exterior, was entering Mallory Park through the great gates opening on the road of the same name.

It was still early. The four Mallorys—for as yet no other guests had arrived—were lingering around the breakfast-table, when a message was brought to Mrs. Mallory.

"A young lady," said the footman, "is asking to see you. Her name is Miss Wood, and she wished me to say it was about something important."

"Miss Wood?" repeated Nora. "Who can it be? Do you know any one of the name hereabouts, Teddy?"

Sir Edric shook his head.

"Is she really a lady?" inquired Mrs. Mallory, turning to the footman.

The young man glanced at his superior, the butler, who just then entered the room.

"Mr. Dickinson," he said, "was crossing the hall when the lady rang. Perhaps he could——"

Mr. Dickinson came forward.

"A lady," he repeated, "were you asking if it was a lady? Undoubtedly so, ma'am, as you request my opinion."

Nora was a little, or a good deal, in awe of Dickinson. She rose. "I suppose I must see her, but what a bore it is! So early—I can't understand it. In the library, did you say?" and the footman repeated the words affirmatively. "You are more confiding in the country, I suppose," she said, laughingly to her host, as he, too, rose from his chair. "In London we have to be more cautious whom we admit."

A few minutes passed. Sir Edric and Mr. Mallory were standing by the window, discussing the weather; Miss Prissy was collecting crumbs for the poor little half-starved birds on the terrace, when the door was flung open and Nora burst in. Her cheeks were very red, her eyes were sparkling—nevertheless, the effect of the whole was far from pleasing.

"Bernard, Prissy, Teddy," she exclaimed, "now I hope you will do me justice. See here," and to her astonished hearers she held up—a small sealskin purse.

"Your purse," said her husband, "and its contents?"

"Yes—at least I hope so. I have not counted thoroughly yet. She says she has not opened it, but of course I know better than to believe that, and——"

"But who is 'she?'" asked Sir Edric, with a strange, painful foreboding.

"'She'? Why, that girl, of course—the governess, or whatever she is or pretends to be, who travelled with us yesterday, and whom you all thought me so cruel to. Now I hope you will change your opinion."

"But you don't—you can't mean to say she took your purse. And if she did, why has she brought it back?" asked the young man, and had his cousin's wife been less absorbed, she would have seen that his face was paler than usual.

She gave a disagreeable laugh.

"A bad conscience, I suppose. Fear of discovery,

perhaps. She may have found out who we were," Nora replied.

"And she has confessed to it? "exclaimed Edric, unutterably shocked. "Impossible!"

"Confessed? Oh, bless you, no! Of course not. How absurdly innocent you are, Teddy! She has some cock-and-bull story of finding it in the lining of her cloak—which I let her narrate—then I quietly requested her to consider herself at my mercy and not to attempt to escape till I consulted all of you. So she is there in the library. I left the door ajar and gave George a hint to stay about the hall."

Bernard's lips drew together. He glanced at his cousin.

"Teddy," he said, "come with me."

They left the room together, followed by Nora.

"I reminded her that you—the owner here—are a magistrate," she remarked to Sir Edric triumphantly. "I am glad you seem inclined to take it seriously. Such things should not be slurred over."

Cecil was standing by the library table. She was trembling terribly, but she stood erect, disdaining to seek any support. One glance at her face made both men feel that they wished the floor could open at their feet. And it was Cecil who first spoke.

"You are a magistrate, this lady tells me," she said, addressing Sir Edric. "That is why I have waited here, as she told me. I will tell you both—you two men—what I have told her, and then I will go, leaving you to deal with her as you choose. It is nothing to me—only—I did not think there were such people in the world," and here, with a gasping quiver, she all but broke down.

Bernard pushed a chair toward her. She shook her head.

"No, no, not in this house," she said.

Then, with marvellous self-control, she repeated her story calmly and precisely. "I came myself," she said in conclusion, "because I did not want my friend here to know how unfortunate my first experience of a jour-

ney alone had been, as it was made for her sake. When I go home I will tell everything to my father and mother."

"Why—knowing the material you had to deal with—why, in heaven's name, did you not send the wretched thing by a messenger?" burst out Sir Edric.

"I only thought of what was safest—and—of course I was not afraid," she replied simply, rearing her proud little head as she spoke. "And now I will go."

Mrs. Mallory sprang forward.

"Bernard," she ejaculated, "you are not going to allow this! And you"—to Sir Edric—"you, a magistrate! It is conniving at——"

"Nora," shouted her husband, "are you mad?"

Cecil crossed the hall straight toward the entrance. She did not see that she was followed—and by her host. He opened the door himself and stood beside it.

"May I not," he began, in such painful agitation that the girl's kind heart was touched, "may I not beg you, entreat you, to—to try to forget it? That it happened in my house is enough to make me hate the place forever. We may never meet again, but will you not let me say how I admire you—your courage, your——"

"Thank you," she said. "It was not your fault, I know," and with a sudden impulse of generosity she held out her hand.

He touched it for an instant, as if it was that of an Empress bestowing pardon.

The Darting Hunt Ball was to be a very good one that year. Chilly and raw as was the weather, frost had as yet held off, and the neighborhood was full of the devotees of fox-hunting. All the houses, big and little, which were ever let for the winter season had been taken; the great residents had found no difficulty in arranging their house parties.

Mallory was overflowing with guests, and Mrs. Bernard Mallory, whom Sir Edric could not in common courtesy to his cousin have refrained from inviting to do the honors for him, was in the seventh heaven of self-important delight. What had passed between her

husband and herself with regard to her outrageous behavior to their young fellow-traveller had never transpired. For a day or two she had been somewhat subdued in manner and increasingly deferential to Sir Edric, and as she had really seen too little of him to know that the almost freezing politeness with which he treated her was not his usual and natural bearing, she grew by degrees comfortably satisfied that he had forgotten the disagreeable episode—nay, not improbably, that in his heart he considered that she had been all along in the right.

"Men never like to be put in the wrong, you know," she observed shrewdly to Miss Prissy, "so I don't wonder Teddy avoids the subject, otherwise I would have told him that the money was quite correct. None had been taken. 'Miss Wood'—what a common name! Most likely she chose it on purpose. I don't suppose for an instant it was her real name—Miss Wood must really have got frightened and conscience-stricken."

But Priscilla Mallory received her sister-in-law's confidence unwillingly.

"For goodness' sake, Nora," she said uneasily, "leave the subject. I cannot endure the thought of it, and I have now and then a nervous dread that we have not heard the last of it."

"What on earth do you mean?" asked Mrs. Bernard.

"Oh," Prissy replied, "I—I dare say it is all my fancy, but do you know, Nora, when we were driving home the other day—the day of the meet we could not go to, you remember—I had an idea that I saw her—Miss Wood—in a pony-cart."

"Well, and what if you did? Governesses often drive about in carts," replied Nora scornfully.

"But supposing—supposing she is in some very good family in the neighborhood, and that she told the story and it got about," said Priscilla, lowering her tone.

"My dear Prissy," exclaimed her sister-in-law, "how ridiculous you are! What if it did get about? If she told such a disgraceful story against herself, she would

find herself sent to the rightabout. The girl would not be so mad. The only thing I feel ashamed of is the having let her off as easily as we did."

But Priscilla said nothing.

A large party went to the ball from Mallory Park. Mrs. Bernard Mallory was resplendent; with certain people her loud, rather boisterous gayety passed muster as exuberant good nature, and, her vanity being excessive, for the moment the good nature was genuine.

She had danced once or twice, and the room was filling fast, when a chance remark from her partner infused one drop of gall into her cup of triumph.

"The Darting Manor people are late this evening," he said. "They are not a very large party, on account of Lady Frances not being quite well again yet. I fear she will have to go abroad after all. Have you seen her lately?"

Mrs. Bernard Mallory murmured something indefinite—Lady Frances Greatorex was almost the only neighbor of any standing who had not called upon her.

"I am anxious to meet one of their guests," the young man went on. "A daughter of Lord Mavor's is staying at the manor. They are cousins, you know. The girl is charming. I was introduced to her in the summer, and she dances exquisitely. She is the only daughter, Cecil W——"

But at that instant something caught his attention, and being rather a rattle, his sentence was never completed.

Nora's wits set to work on the problem of how to make Lady Frances's acquaintance.

"If Teddy would but give a dance," she thought, "she would have to call on me. I do hope no one will find out I don't know her. I must get Prissy to point her out."

And she turned to look for her sister-in-law. She had not long to wait; as if conscious of her wish, almost at the same moment Miss Priscilla made her appearance, hurrying toward her as fast as the crowded room would allow. But what was the matter? Prissy looked

strangely pale. Surely she was not going to faint or any nonsense like that, and spoil all their pleasure.

"Nora," she whispered, as soon as she was within hearing, "come aside somewhere with me. I have something very particular to say to you."

Half-alarmed, half-annoyed, Mrs. Bernard Mallory followed her to a quiet corner.

"Nora," gasped the poor woman, suffering vicariously for what she at least was entirely innocent of. "Nora, I have seen—the Darting Manor party; they came while the last dance was going on. And—who do you think is with them?"

Nora's eyes opened to their widest.

"How should I know? What are you talking about?" she replied querulously.

"It is—that girl—the girl you insulted so. What shall we do?"

"The governess!" exclaimed Nora, though she grew perceptibly paler. "What are they thinking of?"

"Governess! nonsense," said patient Prissy, losing her temper at last. "That was only your absurd fancy. She is—do you hear me, Nora?—she is Miss Wode—W O D E—Lord Mavor's daughter. Cecil Wode, whom every one thinks so lovely, and every one knows that the Mavors are perfect models of goodness and excellence."

Nora caught hold of the back of a chair.

"Prissy," she said, "help me to go home. Say I have fainted, or—or anything you like."

Poor woman! No "saying" was necessary, for as she spoke, the fainting very nearly became a fact, and she fell back, all but unconscious, in the chair beside her. And at that instant a girl, on the arm of her host and partner, Mr. Greatorex of Darting, entered the room. It was Cecil Wode.

"What is the matter," she exclaimed. "Oh, she has only fainted. No, no," as she put aside poor Prissy and her well-meant but clumsy efforts, "not like that. Don't try to prop her up. Lay her quite flat. I will see to her."

And when Nora came to herself, the face bending over her seemed indeed like that of an avenging angel.

But in reply to her whispered tremulous attempt at apology and gratitude came some words which were her best restorative.

"I know you must be sorry. I have told no one, for —for your family's sake. And I promise you never to tell any one."

Mrs. Bernard Mallory did not stay as late as she had intended, but she recovered herself sufficiently to return to the dancing-room, where she sat quietly in a corner on the plea of not feeling well. And she certainly looked very pale.

Words would fail me to describe Sir Edric's sensations when, standing beside his cousin's wife, and addressing her with evident friendliness, he recognized— Miss Wood!

Later in the evening, he found himself being introduced to her, and, meeting no resentment in her eyes, he ventured to ask her for a dance.

What passed between them during that dance with regard to the painful story Cecil so generously promised to bury forever concerns us not.

"Try to be sorry for her, do—for—for—my sake, may I say?" were Miss Wode's last words.

Some few months later a passing sensation was created in the world of "society" by the announcement of the engagement of Edric Mallory and Cecil Wode. It was not a very brilliant marriage for the only child and heiress of Lord Mavor, but it proved to be, in the best sense of the word, a happy one—which surely is far better.

Sir Edric had found his pearl—thanks to a ridiculous little sealskin purse.

The sympathies of the reader will be with poor Sammy in this brief but pregnant chronicle of an unlucky life. Even after the insinuation with which the author, Miss Madge Robertson, M. A., closes, one cannot help hoping that things turned out better than just then seemed likely. The story was written expressly for ROMANCE.

THE REVISED EDITION.

THE baby was at first ridiculously like Sammy. Sammy did not see the resemblance. He remarked with the critical infallibility of a three-year-old that "the kid" (meaning the white-starched and embroidered divinity who made the household gods tremble) had not even Moosey's claims to good looks. Moosey took this as a personal insult, and after a protesting chorus of barks and growls seized Sammy by his tartan skirt and a bit of his plump little leg. Sammy then concluded that the circumstances warranted a reconsideration of his decision, and he conveyed to Moosey his regrets that his diagnosis had been hasty and his judgment premature. He even went further, and acknowledged that he had not been wholly unbiassed in the matter. Moosey handsomely relinquished his hold and the case was settled, and Moosey spent the rest of the day posing in, as nearly as possible, the attitude of the white china dog in the cabinet which he admired extremely. And Sammy went and poked the baby while the nurse was having it out with the parlor-maid. The baby howled, and then spent the rest of his life paying back that poke.

But still the baby was Sammy's miniature, and every one said, "How like!" and Sammy had rage in his heart.

The days went on and the baby, after the manner of his kind, got bigger and older. And as he grew, he became so much prettier, cleverer, stronger and better-

behaved than Sammy that the family called him the "Revised Edition."

Then it was that Moosey sneered at Sammy with his tail and that Sammy began to loathe the Revised Edition.

At five years of age, Sammy was busy acquiring miscellaneous information. At two, the Revised Edition eyed Sammy and took notes. Sammy blundered painfully into the knowledge that a chair will not balance itself with a person of Sammy's size sitting on its back; that coal-oil as a beverage can be improved upon; that there are less unpleasant ways of learning the alphabet than by tracing with the forefinger the letters on a hot stove. And the Revised Edition appropriated this dearly-bought knowledge, and displayed no desire to prove the conclusions by personal demonstration.

Sammy tried to break down the brick wall of nursery rules by repeated attacks, and then howled to the winds of heaven his opinion of personal chastisement and those who administered it. But the Revised Edition, conscious that his own undeveloped powers of speech would prevent his having the satisfaction of subsequent vituperation, kept the rules and avoided the chastisement. All this was very trying to Sammy. No elderly brotherly patronage was possible, nor was his brief show of authority impressive, since he himself was usually in durance vile, and the Revised roamed free as air.

Through boyhood, as through babyhood, Sammy acted as an experiment to be improved on. After he had coquetted with the different attractions of school-life, he finally settled down to sums and baseball. The Revised Edition took the prize for arithmetic and got on the first nine. Sammy's reputation as a scholar and an athlete might have been brilliant if he had not had a younger brother who outstripped him in everything. Was anything ever so maddening?

What made Sammy rage and foam at the mouth was the fact that he was the originator and basis of the Revised's successes. It was Sammy who schemed for the jerseys and knickerbockers, but it was the Revised

Edition whom the family fell down and worshipped when the suits were tried on. It was Sammy who begged for a canoe, but it was the Revised who won the small boy's single in the canoe race.

So at college. Was it Sammy who, amid the wild yells of a madly enthusiastic crowd, was borne on shoulders from the field, after a grandly-won game of Rugby football? Did Sammy get the largest vote ever polled for President of the Debating Society? Was Sammy the youngest member of the graduating class? No! These triumphs belonged to a younger member of his family.

The younger member came to be called "The clever Mr. Soldan." This distinction brought Sammy's gathering usefulness to a head. People should see which was the clever Mr. Soldan, and away he swam with strong strokes into the sea of life. At first, he kept ahead of the Revised Edition; the latter rapidly gained upon him, but presently a dainty silvery boat with "soft silken sails" drifted right in their course. In the stern sat a slip of a girl—but such a girl, such a face!—holding the ropes aimlessly. On the stern was painted LOVE. To dive under it, or swim around it, or clamber on board and dive off the other side? A moment's gasp, and in they both clambered, Sammy first, but—they did not dive off the other side. The swimming contest was postponed indefinitely, and another contest entered upon. Who could best steer the boat for the girl the rest of the way? The tussle was lengthy and powerful. Sammy went in for blood, and the Revised Edition had a reputation to sustain. Besides, he wanted the girl and the boat. The girl looked on and may have been interested. At last, one night she told the Revised, presumably in answer to a question, that, however slender were her hopes of a heavenly harbor now, they would vanish into thin air if she took for a life-pilot such a piece of perfection as he was. She was looking for a man with a spice of sin in him, she said.

When Sammy heard this, he applied for the vacant position and got it. Then was the hour of Sammy's

triumph. Then did the Revised Edition's long-vaunted superiority pale before the sun of Sammy's victory. The early morning air was redolent of it. Sammy was avenged.

Thus this story seems to have an end.

Sammy was married five months ago; and the Revised is courting another girl.

Only the other day, Sammy seized the Revised Edition by the shoulder, and in a burst of brotherly confidence said: "Old man, you never in your whole confounded career got more ahead of me than on the unlucky day when I thought I had got ahead of you!"

It would be interesting to know whether in real life people fly off into suspicions of the honesty of their best friends as easily as they do in stories. One would think that a woman might say to her husband: "This looks strange to you. I cannot explain it now. You must only trust me, until I am free to tell you everything,"—and that he would thereupon lay aside his doubts. If poor Smith had only done this, he might have saved himself a deal of trouble. But then Mrs. Smith, perhaps, failed to set the matter in its true light before him. The story was written by Alice S. Wolf for the *Argonaut*.

HER HUSBAND'S VALET.

THOSE who know my friend Knollys only casually are apt to set him down as a cynic, because, at times, his speech is slightly mordant and he is given to ridiculing bravery and charity as madness; but I know danger holds no dread for him, and have accidentally happened on some of his many good deeds. To me he has always seemed a man of unusually lenient judgment, putting the best construction possible on the evil actions of his fellows.

If I am unreasonably proud of my friendship with Knollys, it is pardonable, for he is an experienced man of the world, who must be nearing fifty, whereas I am not yet thirty. Ever since he saved my life in India, at the imminent risk of his own, he holds, he feels, a certain amount of responsibility on my account, and I am only too willing to view the world under his tutelage.

But I am glad that my mother did not hear him relate the story that spoiled my dinner, which was assuredly a good one, since he ordered it. She maintains that Knollys is extremely unsympathetic; and, prejudiced as she is, she would not have observed that, under his cold exterior, there lurked a warm pity for his friend.

It had been arranged, during his short stay with us,

that in two months I should join him in London; and the prospect of another delightful run through Europe with him made me somewhat forgetful of the fact that it was his last night in the city.

He had rashly promised my cousin to visit his rose-gardens, and on that afternoon redeemed his word. When we met at the club, I noticed that Knollys appeared tired. He stood at the window, apart from the other men, looking across at the plaza, and did not at first notice me.

"I suppose it was irksome," I began, "for Tom can talk of nothing but his roses and his wife. You see they are renewing their honey-moon. Their affairs looked very black for a time, but suddenly righted themselves, and their friends are suffering the consequences."

Knollys ceased to watch the wavering shadows of the trees, and turned inquiringly.

"It was a misunderstanding," I continued, as we walked out to dinner; "Tom forgot that appearances are often misleading, and she was unable to furnish a satisfactory explanation of her conduct."

"I conjectured something of the kind from what he told me coming back to the city, and it reminded me strongly of a little episode in the life of a friend of mine. And she, too, in some indefinable way—some turn of the head or trick of the voice—recalled my friend's wife. The story might interest you."

"I am quite sure it would," I returned, eagerly, for Knollys is always well worth hearing.

"It all happened some years ago, but I think I remember the points quite well," he commenced, smiling faintly; "I am not so certain, however, that I shall be able to do the story justice, for I am not a clever *raconteur*, and you will probably surmise the end long ere I have reached it. My friend—we might call him Smith—my friend Smith was able to be of some service to a man whom he met in a foreign land. The man met with a fatal accident, a few days later, and, together with the valet, Smith volunteered to nurse him. The

stranger, feeling he had a claim on Smith because of the first favor, burdened him with the pleasant task of bearing the news of his death to his wife.

"Upon Smith's return to England, he carried out his mission, and having gone once, went again. She was a very young woman, and very beautiful, and Smith was irresistibly attracted. Her husband had been a scoundrel, and, after a decent lapse of time, she married Smith. For the first four years of their marriage they were so intensely happy that it is possible they proved rather tiresome to their friends. About that time, Smith began to miss money and other articles of value, and was finally able to trace the thefts to the butler. The man vainly denied the charge, and, although none of the missing valuables were found in his possession, he was discharged without a character. This mild measure was adopted because of the intercessions of my friend's wife.

"For some weeks Smith entertained no doubt that he had fastened the burglaries on the proper party, but on returning home one evening he found his wife in the library. She had opened his desk by means of a false key, and in her hands held a roll of notes. Guilt was depicted in every feature; she cowered before him—she was abject in her cowardice."

"She needed the money to save a brother," I broke in authoritatively.

"No; for she had no brother nor any near relative who might need help," Knollys said, as he set down his glass. "The man, anxious to find some excuse for her, suggested this; but it was for no relative. It was for herself; yet she had wanted for nothing that money could buy or love devise. He might not have conceived her sin to be so flagrant had she not permitted the servant to suffer in her stead. So far as it was possible, Smith made restitution to the man; but by her silence she had convicted herself of the most heinous of all transgressions in her husband's eyes. There was one way only in which he could explain the matter

to himself. He had never believed in kleptomania until then, but it was the one thing upon which his mind centred. And she confessed she had often felt impelled to take valuables for which she could have no possible need.

"He was a proud man, and he was tortured by his discovery. He had regarded his wife, his child, and himself as being made of finer clay than the rest of mankind. His disillusion was complete. The day after she was unmasked she came into a splendid inheritance, but Smith rigorously refused to permit the expenditure of any of it in the household. He dared not leave her for an instant, thinking the desire might come back to her. He sacrificed his pride by telling the true state of affairs to her maid, a trusted servant, and together they kept vigilant guard over her. It was the most insidious cruelty he could contrive—one that must have wounded her sorely. She was never permitted to lose sight of her sins. He was inflexible in his course, keeping her always under his relentless eyes. My friend Smith thought himself, in those days, quite capable of accusing and judging his prisoner, and seeing that the sentence was properly carried out. When she seemed to forget for an instant her past error, Smith ever so gently turned the thumb-screws. Ah, he really devised modes of exquisite torture that she should properly expiate her crime.

"No, she did not rebel; she drearily accepted the penalty of her misstep. At first she lived in deadly fear lest he should send her away from him; but when she found it was part of his plan to be with her constantly, she seemed content. She could not, rather would not, grow accustomed to the thought that she had forfeited Smith's love. During the first few days she hovered around him, hoping to lure some expression of pardon from him, some word of love. Never forgetting that she bore his name, he treated her with a cold civility that was more frightful to her than would have been an exhibition of brute force. He was disciplining

himself all the while in repressing his feelings, for, as you have perhaps suspected, he loved her as passionately as ever.

"She devoted herself exclusively to the child, who had become a source of constant agony to Smith. If he took a fruit or sweetmeat that had been forbidden him, it became to Smith's fevered imagination evidence that he had inherited the mother's weakness; in other days it would have seemed the child's lovable fault.

"The child slept in the mother's apartments, and Smith was about to retire one night when his wife came in hurriedly, bidding him send immediately for their physician, for their little one was choking. Smith went back with her, and, after seeing the child, left the room—she thought to send for the family physician. She used the simple remedies that had formerly proved effectual, but without avail. She raised her eyes to Smith in agonizing appeal, but he made no movement. At length he told her that he had not summoned a physician, believing it better that the child should die."

"What?" I cried, aghast, my loud tone in marked contrast to his low, unhurried words.

"You are not eating," remarked Knollys, as he reflectively regarded the bead that had formed round the edge of his glass. "You are astounded at my friend's action, but he himself did not question the wisdom of his course; perhaps it did not occur to him that he could err. Better, he thought, to cause himself one sharp pang than untold misery to the bitter end. In fact, he believed he was doing a very brave deed—to consign your child to death is not such a simple matter as it might appear. When the mother learned what he had done, she was wildly indignant for an instant, then quietly placed the child in his crib and stoically watched his sufferings. And what had seemed quite right and courageous in himself struck Smith as monstrous in the mother. You are neglecting your filet. You will find it——"

"But the mother?" I reminded.

"The mother?" echoed Knollys, wearily. "You pro-

gress too rapidly. Smith was able to dismiss from his mind the idea that he had been instrumental in bringing about the little fellow's death, for it would have been impossible for the physician to reach the house before the child expired. The mother, however, did not reason with so much finesse, and, after the death of her child, failed visibly. In this instance physicians were called in, but what they might have been able to do for the child they could not do for the mother. It is true she could not have found life very joyous, but her doctors agreed they had never before seen any one so determined to escape from this world. There was no illness—only a growing languidness, a gradual putting by of the smallest tasks, and a want of will to recover. If ever a woman died of a broken heart, it was my friend's wife."

"Did she give no explanation of her conduct?" I demanded, leaning on the table heavily.

Knollys was looking at something beyond me, and did not hear me until I had reiterated my question.

"So you do not believe she was a kleptomaniac? The explanation did not come from her, but from another quarter," he finally proceeded. "She was delirious for nearly a week before her death. In her lucid moments, she would ask the date, then strive to recollect something that elusively evaded her. She was continually murmuring about some money that was to be sent to some one—whom, they could not determine. Smith had been with her all the day, and, toward evening, feeling he must be alone for a while to give vent to his misery, went to the library. The morning's mail was awaiting him. The topmost letter was addressed to her in a man's unfamiliar hand. He tore it open, filled with insane jealousy.

"Ah, of course, you perceive from whom it was. You are in the same position as the novel-reader, who, knowing both sides of the story, is aware of the end long before the hero and heroine have lived it out. Unfortunately, Smith knew only his portion of the tale. The missive purported to come from her first

husband, whom Smith had helped bury, but whom she believed to be still alive, and cautioned her to forward his monthly allowance at once, or he would be under the painful necessity of declaring himself to Smith without delay. It was a pity he had not done so long before, as Smith would have recognized the valet. Does it not seem altogether impossible that she should have been so credulous? So, you see, the mystery, which Smith had believed to be no mystery, was cleared without her speaking, but a little too late, for, while Smith was reading the letter, she passed away, leaving him in a maze of maddening reflections. He has had a long while to appreciate the bitter pathos of the incident, and sometimes ponders on the problem of whether she would have confessed had he not suggested to her the excuse of kleptomania. Knowing the simplicity of her morals, he comprehends the struggle there must have been while the butler was suffering for her. I think Smith would have pardoned her for taking the money to buy the man, so that he should not make himself known; even her own silence, had he been conscious it was done that she might not be separated from him. Her love for Smith was the one passion of her life, and she paid for it dearly."

"Poor woman!" I murmured, tritely. Knollys raised his head, his lips parted in a shadowy smile. "Note how we differ. I should say, 'Poor man.' She is in a place of peace."

"I am glad I am not acquainted with your friend Smith," I observed, trying to shake off the gloom of Knollys's story. "He must be a very sombre companion. Do you see much of him?"

"The world knows nothing of his history; he does not wear his heart on his sleeve. It is only to me that he confesses how dull he finds life. Yes, I see a great deal of my friend Smith—a great deal too much. Let us drink to his early demise. Believe me, it is what would please him best."

There is a breath from the old heroic days in this story of the Franco-Prussian war. It is translated for ROMANCE from the French of Paul Célières by Elizabeth Elliot.

THE REVENGE OF A BAD FELLOW.

"WHERE there is smoke there must be fire." If this proverb were only false, as are so many others in that great accumulation falsely called the wisdom of nations, we need not speak of it. But it is not only false, it is both untrue and harmful.

"Where there is smoke there must be fire." That is the broad door open for every slander, the passport of every slanderer. Whoever may choose to spread evil stories of no matter whom, there is always some one to say significantly, "Oh! yes, it sounds absurd, but—there is no smoke without fire!"

At once the slandered one is under the ban of public opinion. But, for all that and in spite of the wisdom of nations, there is, and oftener than one would think, smoke without fire.

Why, for example, was it that a dozen years ago, all the people of Vaudoy, in speaking of Jacques Fauvel, said, "He's a bad fellow"?

He had never done harm to any one of them, he had stolen from no one, he had never in his life had a conflict with the authorities, and yet they thought him capable of anything, except of the good which perhaps he would not have failed to do if the opportunity had come to him.

Vaudoy is a little village, like all little villages, except perhaps a little more old-fashioned and rustic than others. There is no thought of sidewalks. The few thatched roofs are scattered irregularly here and there. At the butcher's the joints of meat hang from old-fashioned iron hooks in the wall outside. As for the people, they are peasants, with all the faults and all the

merits of peasants, worthy people, for the most part, incapable of knowingly doing harm to a neighbor—which did not prevent them from saying to every comer, "Jacques Fauvel's a bad fellow." If any one had asked them why, they would have been at a loss to tell.

This Jacques Fauvel was a big-boned man of thirty, dried up and browned by the scorching sun. His long hair and grizzly beard, left to grow for economy's sake, gave him a rough appearance, though there was no hardness in his expression. His glance was timid, his smile, when he did smile, more sad than gay; his whole being seemed as if he had long been bearing some heavy burden which made his head droop and his movements heavy. In his walk and gesture there was discouragement, almost despair, but never anger.

He was like some wild creature. If his daily needs obliged him to exchange some words with men, he hastened, visibly, to conclude the conversation. He went little from his own home. Only on Sunday he came sometimes to the little plaza, where he sat apart, against the parapet of the small bridge at the corner of the road, and from a distance watched the children play.

Was this shyness the cause or the effect of his bad reputation? Did he shun men because they had repulsed him? or did they repulse him because he had shunned them? They might have inclined to the latter opinion, for since his childhood he had been as they saw him now.

Whether it was from fierceness or shyness, he had always lived apart, speaking little, keeping to the fields, choosing the society of animals rather than of men. A little later, at the age when the young peasant turns naturally toward a family life, and when the sight of a pretty girl makes his heart beat and his face turn red, Jacques had never mingled in the village dances, had made advances to no one. He remained a bachelor.

Why? Oh! because he was a being apart, a savage, a bad fellow. The country people did not take the trouble to seek any other reason for this strange voluntary

isolation. It never occurred to them that perhaps Jacques doubted himself, or that he would have leaped for joy had one of the village girls offered him her hand; they never thought of the possibility that Jacques had set his heart on a girl so rich that he despaired of winning her, and had sworn to himself that he would have no one since he could not have her. They had said, "Jacques is a bad fellow." That was the simplest solution, and since then they had got so in the habit of saying it that they really thought it.

He lived at the entrance to the village, in a poor little house in the midst of his tiny field, which adjoined on the side of the village the vegetable garden of Claude Pichard, from which it was separated only by a hedge.

Claude Pichard, besides being the Mayor, was one of the big men of the country. He leased for farming the lands of Monsieur de la Haudraye, and cultivated, besides, his own ground which increased every day. In spite of the moral distance that separated them, Jacques Fauvel and Claude Pichard, without being intimate had never been bad neighbors. Jacques kept to himself, stayed on his own ground, and all went well. A few sharp words exchanged from time to time did not count, between neighbors divided only by a hedge. Such things are unavoidable and entail no consequences. But it was enough to make Claude Pichard declare with the rest of the world, that Jacques was a bad fellow. And so, when he saw him smile at his children and act as if he would make friends with them, Claude would cry loudly, "Come in, children!"

He had four children, of whom one, the daughter of his first marriage, Etiennette, called "Tiennette," was a beautiful girl of twenty. It was the age for her to marry. But Claude was in no hurry. He accumulated her *dot*, thinking always that Tiennette could wait, and that she would gain by doing so. When Jacques, digging in his corner of ground, heard upon the gravel path of his neighbor's kitchen garden the click of Tiennette's wooden shoes, he thrust his spade deep into the ground, crossed his arms upon the handle, and, without

appearing to do so, followed her a moment with his eyes. Then he wiped his forehead with his hand, and turned to his digging again, murmuring, "Work, old fool!"

As to the lovely Tiennette, she thought no more of her neighbor than as if her neighbor did not exist. She only spoke of him to say with the rest of the world, "He is a bad fellow." She had so often heard it said by everyone else and by her father.

But with what could Claude Pichard reproach poor Jacques? Whence came that sullen animosity which the mayor scarcely concealed, and which found vent in bitter words here and there and in threats? It all came from a goat—"Grizzly," Jacques called her,—a poor, lean old goat, the only living creature for whom Jacques had soft words and caresses. He did truly love Grizzly. When he appeared at one end of the field, the goat, fastened at the other, turned her head, flapping her ears and bleating, and pulling upon the rope to come to him. She loved him, the poor beast. What man had always refused him, the brute gave him. Was it not right to love her?

A real communion of ideas had long been established between the two. They understood each other. Sometimes, during the great heat of summer, when under the motionless leaves the heavy air is full of the dull buzzing murmur of insects, at the hour when no one works, Jacques would lie down upon the grass beside Grizzly, taking her head in his hand, and gravely in a half whisper, tell her all his troubles, all those secrets which filled his heart, that he had never told anyone and that no one would care to hear. When she looked at him with her serious eyes, the poor man would weep there all alone beside the goat. For his goat he would have given his house, his field, everything. He would himself bear injustice, perhaps even blows, but let no one touch Grizzly! So when he heard sometimes behind the hedge his neighbor Pichard crying, "Get out! get out, you dirty beast!" his face would flush and he would fling out some hasty answer.

Unfortunately for him the poor beast had become the *bête noire* of his neighbor, and, to tell the truth not without reason. Jacques usually kept his goat fastened up, but when she had eaten all the grass within her reach she bleated so plaintively, she choked herself against her rope so earnestly, that he took pity on her and gave her her liberty. The first use poor Grizzly made of it was to rush to the hedge behind which she saw an Eden full of temptations. She stretched her neck through the thorny twigs, pushed with her horns and her hoofs, until she finished by squeezing her head through and snatching some dainty morsel. And the budding apple twigs were no more sacred in her eyes than the budding willow twigs. She had finally succeeded in forcing through the hedge one or two small openings through which she could slip the half of her body, and finally the whole of it. On several occasions she had browsed her fill and gambolled with a light heart among the vegetables. Hence came the great rage of Pichard, who had said to Jacques, "You had better look out if she ever gets in again!"

Frightened by their threat, Jacques, for a good while, fastened her cord. But every one knows how little to believe in the feigned severity of a father for his spoiled child. It happened as if by accident that the cord was old and brittle. Grizzly by perseverance succeeded in snapping it, and again began her escapades. Without knowing it, the poor beast returned to her master evil for good, and she paid dearly herself for her unconscious ingratitude.

One day—it was in the Spring of 1869—Jacques, starting at daybreak for his work in the fields, had as usual fastened Grizzly. He had chosen the spot in his little enclosure where the surrounding grass was the greenest and freshest. He left the cord long enough for Grizzly to have within reach breakfast and dinner, and, if need be, supper also. But beasts are like men. What they have is never worth what they want. The new grass was tender and appetizing under the yellow rays of the sun slipping though the branches of

the apple-tree; a warm breeze swayed the young twigs gently; all sorts of pleasant spring odors were blown about. Where could Grizzly be better off than there? Where but exactly where she ought not to be, in the garden of neighbor Pichard, where waved the dazzling branches of apple, pear and peach trees in bloom, glittering white as if it had snowed during the night? The sun shining upon all this splendor, gilding with unexpected reflections the tiny pink tips of the blossoms, made an irresistible scene. Grizzly, nibbling daintily at the grass around her, with that disdainful air, so pretty even in an old gray goat, rolled her eyes round, surveying neighbor Pichard's garden. From time to time she bleated gently, then pulled at her cord and finding herself suddenly strangled, returned to her nibbling. But it was only grass. And just over there were such beautiful things of all sorts, and so good! What a feast! And a fresh pull on the cord was harder than the last. In short, the noon horn had not sounded before the cord was broken—which was equivalent to saying that neighbor Pichard had lost his harvest. Through the whole day Grizzly ravaged the flower-beds, trampled upon the young vegetables and tore down the fruit tree branches—a veritable carnage.

In time, however, one wearies of anything. When Jacques returned, he found his dear Grizzly free, it is true, but sleeping tranquilly under the shade of the apple tree, and waking to gaze at him with a serene air as one having a clear conscience. Neighbor Pichard, who was in his garden, did not say a word, so Jacques, in his ignorance, went to bed without re-tying Grizzly. Why should he? She didn't stir, poor creature, and would interfere with no one.

The next morning, when he woke at daybreak, Jacques's first thought as usual was for his goat. He opened the door and called, "Come and say good morning, Grizzly. Come, my pet!"

Usually Grizzly did not keep him waiting. She was generally the first to awaken, and Jacques was most apt to find her bleating, at the door, if she were free, in the

stable if he had tied her. But this morning he saw no sign of her.

"Ah! the scamp!" he thought, "she has done some mischief. If only it isn't in at Pichard's. I should never hear the last of it."

He went to the hedge, and looked over, but saw nothing. He called again; still nothing. Had some thief come in the night and stolen his goat? The thought sent a shudder to the very marrow of his bones. But no, what use would she have been to a thief, the poor beast? The little milk she gave was not worth her feed —and yet, Grizzly was not there. Jacques went all round the enclosure, through the stable, outside the fence, calling Grizzly. He came in restless and uneasy, finding nothing. As he crossed his enclosure to re-enter the house, his eyes mechanically turned toward the vegetable garden of neighbor Pichard, and he thought he saw, in the midst of the thick hedge, a black spot on the ground. His heart leaped in his breast. It was Grizzly. He stooped down and called softly, "Come here, little one. I have been calling you for an hour."

As Grizzly did not answer, he reached through with his hand. Grizzly was cold, dead! Bewildered, he took hold of the poor brute's body and drew it toward him. But he was not able to disentangle it from the hedge, where an invisible fastening seemed to hold it. Half-wild he plunged head-first into the forest of thorns in order to see better. Grizzly had her neck caught in a slip-knot of strong wire. Neighbor Pichard had set a trap in the hedge! Neighbor Pichard had killed his goat! A wave of rage overwhelmed him. He seized the body of Grizzly in his arms. With one leap he was over the hedge, and rushing towards Pichard's house, crying, "Ah! the rascal, he has killed my goat!"

Pichard was eating breakfast with his family, before starting for the fields. They were all there,—Tiennette, the farm-hands and the little ones. Jacques was no doubt very alarming, for every spoon was stopped half-way as if by magic, every mouth was open and the children began to cry.

"Is it you, Pichard," he demanded, "who did this?"

"I warned you!" replied his neighbor.

"To kill my goat!" cried Jacques.

"Go and look at my vegetable-garden and tell me what you see," said Pichard stolidly." "She spared nothing, the dirty beast!"

"Dirty beast"—the man who had killed Grizzly, the only creature he had to care for, dared to call her that! Jacques was beside himself, he dropped the poor body, and without a word of answer or warning flung himself furiously upon Pichard. The struggle was an unequal one. Jacques was tall, spare and muscular, Pichard was a fat little man with no great strength. At the first blow Jacques sent him rolling into the corner, and commenced to pound him blindly. It was in vain that the farm-hands tried to pull him away. It was in vain that Tiennette begged and the children cried. The blows from his fist rained thick and fast, and heaven knows what would have happened, had Jacques not felt his enemy grow limp under his hand, and stopped of himself. He got up, seized poor Grizzly's body, and went back to his own house, crying like a baby. His anger was appeased, he had revenged himself. Nothing remained now but his grief.

But the affair was not finished. The scuffle had been noisy. Blows and cries had been heard outside. Jacques was seen to rush out, his goat in his arms, and when people saw Pichard with his clothing torn and his face bloody, they all took up the cry, "Jacques tried to murder Claude Pichard."

Blinded with rage, Pichard was in no mood to state the matter calmly. The accusation which he made before the authorities was overwhelming. Jacques had tried to strangle him. Had it not been for the farm-hands he should have been dead. That very evening a messenger was sent post-haste with the accusation and the depositions of witnesses to the Emperor's deputy.

Jacques all this time was in his field. He had dug a grave, had placed in it his goat, and after one long look had thrown upon its body a few spadesful of earth,

Then he stood there, motionless, dull, crushed by the grief at which all the village was laughing. So much fuss for an old gray goat!

Yes, but in the eyes of that poor old goat Jacques had found what he had never seen in any human eyes, the look of a creature that loved him and needed him.

He had to go on with his toil, however. A week after, if he had not forgotten Grizzly, if he could not pass without a shudder the apple-tree beneath which the poor beast slept her last sleep, he had at least forgotten or seemed to have forgotten his neighbor Pichard. A little sadder, a little more silent, he had resumed his usual life, quite unconscious that a storm was gathering over his head. How should he have suspected it? Neighbor Pichard was there in his garden, going and coming as usual. Nothing was changed. Pretty Tiennette appeared from time to time, noticing him no more than formerly. At his neighbor's they seemed to neither love him nor hate him more than they had before the disturbance. In the neighborhood, when he went out, he had always the same reception, a little restraint mingled with a good deal of fear. Nothing was changed, in fact.

So it was like a thunder-clap to him when, one morning in August, he found himself confronted by two *gendarmes.*

"What do you want with me?" he demanded.

"They will tell you that down there."

"You arrest me?"

"So it seems."

"Why is this?"

"That is not our business. Forward march!"

Jacques had for a moment the idea of resistance. He took a step backward, reaching for his stick. But the *gendarmes* had been warned that he was a dangerous man. Before he could seize his weapon one of them had slipped on the handcuffs, the other gave him a push, and they were off.

Crushed by grief and shame, Jacques, without even a glance at the poor home he was leaving, bent his head

in order not to meet the curious stares which tortured him. But he felt them, and their raillery, and hatred pierced him. The street boys ran hooting after him. He heard the noise of their wooden shoes on the road, and the confused tumult of their voices; then he heard nothing but the tramp of the two *gendarmes* beside him and the clink of their sabres.

Arrested! he was arrested! what were they going to do with him? He feared the future, but confusedly. His ideas were not very clear. He felt more surprised than afraid, more crushed than angry. And if he had done wrong, what vows of vengeance he made, what promises never to forget! If he had done wrong, Claude Pichard, from this day, would do wisely to be on his guard!

And this was precisely the advice every one was giving him. The general opinion of Vaudoy was that he would have been wiser to let the affair drop. With a man like Jacques it was playing a dangerous game. Driven to desperation by this arrest and the inevitable condemnation to follow it, might not one fear that the day he got out of prison he would sacrifice to a desire for revenge what little future was left to him? And in this case Pichard might look out for his life, or at least for his goods. It was easy to start a fire, or to poison a whole herd in the winter when they had dry feed. Pichard, when he heard all this, shrugged his shoulders with a valiant air, but at heart he was by no means easy. As for the pretty Tiennette, convinced as she was that Jacques Fauvel was a wicked man, capable of anything, she trembled openly for her father.

One thing that reassured them was that they thought themselves far, very far from any possible retaliation.

They counted, as did everyone else, on a good long sentence, in the court of assizes, of course. The police court was too small for a case of such gravity. And yet they were not spiteful people, these Pichards. They were only judging their own cause, and were influenced by the prejudices of twenty years or more in the country round. Fortunately for Jacques, after the

gendarmes there were the judges. At the very outset, the bench was easily convinced that there was little foundation for the bad name he bore in the neighborhood. Village gossip, that was all. That much settled, the affair was simplified, the intention to murder was reduced to a fit of passion, to a few blows rather too vigorously applied. There was no question of more than an appearance in the police court, where the judges, meaning to be merciful, sentenced him to three months in prison—a decision which seemed to Jacques as cruel as one to hard labor.

Do the judges themselves know what three months in prison mean to a poor wretch? They are so accustomed to pronouncing sentence on habitual frequenters of prisons, who come out of one only to go into another, thanking the court for providing them a shelter in condemning them! Three months! It is ruin. Poverty when one comes out, with the misery of discouragement added to it; it is a broken life, which will most likely end in suicide or worse.

But they could not acquit Jacques, and he served his three months in prison. It was thought in Vaudoy that it was scarcely long enough; he thought it too long. And he thought so without yet knowing, poor fellow, that after this punishment he would have to endure another that the law did not provide for.

On the August day on which he was arrested he was just mowing his little crop, having planted all his land in wheat. While he was in prison, his harvest, which no one took the trouble to rake in, mouldered on the ground. The fruits of his tiny orchard, which no one took the trouble to gather, decayed on the trees and fell. His supply of potatoes, which he had left in a bag before his door, exposed to the rains of three months, he found changed to a muddy mass, without shape or name. In short, the day that he left the prison and returned to his own home, he found there nothing but poverty, a poverty that frightened him, for it came with winter. Snow everywhere, no work possible. Not a penny laid up, no bread on the shelf, no credit at

the baker's! When, after a moment of hesitation and stupor, he finally realized all this, Jacques, standing on his doorstep, stretched his clenched fist toward Claude Pichard, who was crossing his garden, and cried "Curses on you!"

And he said it in such a voice, with such a look, that Pichard shivered with fear. He barricaded his door that night. He never went out unless armed with his heavy stick and followed by his dog. A little more, and he would have asked the police to give their entire attention to his personal safety. He gave himself much trouble for nothing.

Jacques, having exhausted his first fury, thought only of eking out a living. He carried to Provins, to sell, the most portable of the few things left him,—some bits of furniture, an old silver watch. The same day he spent the money he got for them for necessaries, and since then no one had seen him. He did not go out. But what could he be thinking about, all alone there, if not of getting revenge for his three months in prison and for his ruin? Of what, indeed? The poor fellow himself would perhaps have found it hard to tell. He was unlucky, that was all, wretched and solitary. Everything was against him, and without either revolt or resignation, mechanically, he submitted to his fate. Like all creatures of instinct, he suffered without analyzing his sufferings, and like all creatures born good, without accusing anyone. What defined itself most clearly in his broodings was the image of poor Grizzly, dead, and that of the lovely Tiennette, living, it is true, but more dead to him than his old companion. And sighing deeply to himself, sometimes with tears, for these rude natures weep too, he still went on with the toil of preparing for the spring which was coming.

At the first dawn of the April sun he was seen with his spade on his shoulder, starting for the fields, to take up again his former life. He showed to Pichard and his other neighbors, a demeanor neither more fierce nor more humble. In that at least he felt strong. His condemnation did not dishonor him in his own eyes.

He need not hang his head before any one, and he did not hang it. And this was enough to justify anew the hatred and the suspicion with which he was regarded. He was a bad fellow still, and the neighbors were much concerned about the secret plots he was revolving in his brain, until one day when more serious matters distracted their attention.

It was at the end of July, 1870. War had just been declared. Fifteen days after, the French army had melted like a flake of snow in the sunshine. There was nothing left of it.

The Prussians, having no one left to fight, marched upon Paris. From day to day they were expected at Vaudoy. The people were distracted. The older ones, some of whom still remembered the invasion of 1815, advised in vain, "Stay at home, that is the wisest course." Many of the people, but still the smaller part, packed up their valuables in haste, and fled to the forest of Chenoise. The others assembled in great trepidation at the Mayor's, to deliberate. To deliberate? What was the use? The Prussians were the stronger; the vanquished could only submit to the law of the conqueror. Such appeared at least at the end of five minutes to be the result of the deliberations. They had only gathered to gain from each other a little courage, and all seemed settled, when a voice cried,

"Are there then no guns in the village?"

It was Jacques Fauvel who quietly, without bravado, asked this from the end of the room.

"Why do you ask that?" drily inquired Claude Pichard.

"Because if there are any guns in the village, there are enough of us to fight."

"And then, what?"

"Then—we should have acted like good Frenchmen, that is something!"

"And that would have served us——"

"To destroy fifty of them, so many the less for the other villages who would do as we did."

"From a hundred thousand subtract fifty," sneered

Pichard, "and there remains—you can do the sum yourself."

"We could not kill them all, of course," said Jacques.

"And there would still be enough of them left to set fire to the four corners of the village and massacre the people."

"Possible," replied Jacques, "but if there are any guns in the village——"

"Yes," said Pichard, "a skirmish would serve your turn well?"

"How?" asked Jacques.

"How?" said Pichard, grinding his teeth, "that would give you a good chance to put a ball in my head, and revenge your Grizzly—isn't that your game?"

Jacques scornfully shrugged his shoulders, put his hands in his pockets, and, without even a gleam of anger crossing his face, leaned against the wall. If it had then been decided to fight, he would not have touched a gun. But they had no idea of fighting. Jacques had been the only one to take his proposition seriously. It was decided that every one should go home and wait. It was well worth their while to have deliberated.

They did not wait long. In the early days of September, one evening toward six o'clock, in the twilight, some people driving through in a wagon, without drawing rein, cried "The Prussians!"

It was raining in torrents. The horizon was concealed behind a thick gray curtain, against which the trees were vaguely outlined like shadows. In the village the streets were running brooks, where the rain splashed and spattered. Under the low, heavy sky, which seemed to touch the roofs, nothing could be heard but the steady, monotonous rushing of the water falling, and the splashing from an occasional gutter. A sinister evening!

At the first cry of alarm every one ran out—the anguish was so acute that they did not feel the rain. What would the Prussians do? Massacre, rob, burn! They were terrified. None of these poor people had

even seen a Prussian. Ah! how many they were to see after this!

The street boys who had ventured as far as they dared on the road suddenly returned, crying "Here they are! here they are!" And, in fact, behind them was soon heard a heavy rumbling, then the measured sound of troops marching. Five minutes after, the advance guard entered the open place of the village. They were Bavarians. Their light blue uniforms seemed black under the streaming rain; the tassels of their helmets hung limp and wet, their half-high boots were white with mud. They marched in files of four, halted, and stood motionless as if on parade, without a word, without a head turning. In less than a moment, the plaza was covered, the men halting and grounding their arms. Not a man stirred from his place. Worn with fatigue, dying of hunger, shivering beneath the cold autumn rain, they awaited orders and stood there like so many statues. The officer in command, a major, alighted before the mayor's office. He was a big, handsome man, blond, like most of them, with blue eyes, a thick short beard, and nothing hard or alarming in his appearance. A fine, soldierly fellow, in short.

"The mayor?" he asked, in a curt voice.

"I am the mayor," replied Claude Pichard.

"Good. Follow me," said the major, mounting the steps.

He spoke French like a man accustomed to it, correctly and almost without accent. The frequenters of the *Boulevard des Italiens* would no doubt have recognized him; they had seen him more than once at the *Café Anglais* or at Bignon's. He had taken a chair and seated himself at the table in the mayor's office, below the bust of the emperor, in the mayor's own place.

"Eight hundred men to lodge," said he, "and forty horses. Arrange that, so that all may be ready in a half-hour."

"But——"

"Observations are useless. You will furnish me two

hundred bundles of straw, and ten bags of hay. The bread my men carry is wet—eight hundred rations. As for meat, four cows and ten sheep."

"We can only give what we have," said the mayor.

"The Germans pay!" retorted the major proudly.

He reached out his hand to take a sheet of paper from the table. He was intending no doubt to give Pichard an order. But he had no sooner cast his eye upon the sheet, which bore the official heading "Commune de Vaudoy, Mayor's office," than he struck a blow with his fist upon the table crying:

"Vaudoy! Are we at Vaudoy?"

"Why, yes!" replied Pichard.

It was evident the major did not expect to find himself at Vaudoy. He had come the wrong road. With one leap he was outside, had exchanged some hasty German words with his officers, and was back beside the mayor.

During this time, still drawn up in the rain, still motionless, still silent, without even a sign of impatience, the soldiers waited beside their arms.

"How far from here to Courpalais?" asked the major.

"Four good leagues by the road."

"And by the by-paths?"

"You can save a league."

"By leaving here at three o'clock in the morning could we reach there by daybreak?"

"Yes, easily, if you know the way."

"You must send some one to guide me."

One of Pichard's two farm-hands stood by.

"Colinet," said the mayor to him, "can you guide these gentlemen?"

"Straight there," replied Colinet, swaying his body with a stupid air, to which his keen eyes and the slight smile on his lips gave the lie.

"At three o'clock," said the major, "and see here, it will be a dark night, but it will be light enough for me to see to blow your brains out, if there is any occasion."

Colinet giggled foolishly, and replied, "Wait and see, first."

Half an hour after, every one slept or seemed to sleep at Vaudoy; men and horses were under cover. Nothing could be heard but the rain which was still falling, and from time to time the stamping hoof or the impatient neigh of some horse. Here and there a light shone in the window and was reflected in the pools of water lying in the road. A passer would not have suspected that the village was invaded, and the enemy watched in that calm silence. Even the sentinels were invisible. They were there, though. Several times during the night could be heard their imperious, "Who goes there?"

At three o'clock in the morning every door opened. By the light of lanterns the Bavarians took up their knapsacks and, still noiselessly, formed on the plaza. Then the detachment, guided by Colinet, took up their march, to arrive at Courpalais by daybreak.

Claude Pichard, who had risen to assist in the departure, rolled himself again in his blanket, rubbing his hands and saying, "After all, if that is all an invasion amounts to! It will cost us a few bundles of straw, and they may be paid for!"

It had gone off very well—yes. But Pichard congratulated himself a little too soon. At daybreak, as he re-opened his eyes, it seemed to him he heard a distant thunder like cannon. No doubt he was dreaming.

"Tiennette," he called to his daughter, who slept in the next room, "do you hear anything?"

"Yes, father, it sounds like a fight."

He dressed himself hastily and ran out to the plaza. Perhaps he could find out something. Already indeed many were assembled there. But no one knew anything except that the firing, which had begun about four o'clock in the direction of Plessis, was evidently drawing nearer, and conjecture was rife, until suddenly a score of Bavarians rushed into the village. They were covered with mud and blood; one of them fell just in front of the butcher's and did not rise again. Then some shots were heard very near, and the entire detachment which had set out from Vaudoy that very night,

appeared, but visibly reduced in numbers. There were not less than a hundred and fifty men lacking.

The major arrived last, on horseback, guarding the retreat. He was pale as death; a thin stream of blood ran down his forehead. He alighted, walked straight to Pichard, took him by the shoulder, and without saying a word, stood him against the wall where, at a sign from him, two soldiers placed themselves beside him. Then he mounted the steps, entered the office and quickly emerged with a paper in his hand.

"The field-guard?" he cried.

The field-guard who was there approached, trembling.

"Take your drum," said the major, "and make this proclamation through the town."

The guard obeyed, with trembling hands beat a feeble roll upon his drum, and read in a loud voice:

"The second battalion of the fourth Bavarian regiment has been intentionally misled into an ambush of the enemy, by a guide belonging to the commune of Vaudoy. In consequence Major Schembach has decided that the mayor of the commune, or the man who calls himself such, shall be shot. All the citizens of the commune are ordered to be present at the execution, which will take place in a quarter-of-an-hour."

Tiennette, attracted by all this noise, had appeared upon the plaza with the children at the very moment when the guard was reading this sentence of death. She threw herself despairingly upon her father's neck, crying wildly, "Oh! no, no, it can't be! Papa! papa!"

The children, seeing their big sister crying, began to cry too, and clung to their father, covering him with tears and kisses. Major Schembach, leaning on the balustrade of the staircase, rolled a cigarette. A file of soldiers had already emerged from the ranks and drawn up ten paces in front of Pichard, still enveloped in the choking embrace of his children. Around them was an empty space; no one dared to come nearer. Jacques Fauvel alone had had the boldness to come and stand beside the major, leaning like him on the balustrade of the staircase to the mayor's office. He was

looking at Pichard with an expression of something like envy. His eyes seemed to say:

"Isn't he happy to be loved like that? To die like him is worth more than to live like me."

At a gesture from the major, Tiennette and the children had been dragged from their father's arms, and Claude's look following them met that of Jacques.

"Ah!" he said bitterly, "you see you won't need to avenge Grizzly's death, Jacques. Some one else will do it for you."

Jacques shrugged his shoulders. Quietly he went up to the major and put his hand on his shoulder. Less boldness than that would have risked his life, and a shudder of surprise ran through the crowd. What could Jacques want with that German? He was capable of no good, and yet they could almost have admired him for his audacity.

"You are going to shoot that man there?" he inquired calmly of the major, in the midst of a silence like death.

The officer, impressed in spite of himself by the calm and imposing aspect of this peasant, hesitated a moment and answered, "Yes."

"And what has he done? With what do you reproach him?"

"I have lost a hundred and fifty men this night. I take but one from here. You ought to thank me. I could have you all shot."

"It is for the example then?"

"Yes."

"If it is only for that, what difference would it make to you to shoot another in his place?"

The major did not answer.

Jacques went on: "He is a very inoffensive man, while there are some in this place who would just as soon lay wait for you and put a bullet through your head. One man is as good as another for an example. No doubt I should do the same in your place—but he or some other? What is the difference?"

"Well, it is no matter to me," said the major, turning

his back, as if impatient. "If he can find some one to take his place, all right."

Then Jacques, still tranquil and calm, went straight to Pichard, and drawing him from the wall where fear fastened him:

"Escape," he said, "and quickly. Your affair is settled."

At the same moment he had planted himself against the wall, his arms crossing, facing the file of soldiers.

Pichard, dazed, looked at him only half comprehending, and murmured "No—no—this is too much. This can't be!"

But Tiennette, who had seen all, heard all, understood all, wild with joy, dragged him off. The children pulled too, and he went away, repeating, "This can't be! this can't be!"

Jacques, motionless between the two soldiers, had looked at this scene without apparent emotion. But a tear hung on his eyelashes, and when Tiennette disappeared around the corner of the road, they heard him murmur, "She is not to blame."

But, nevertheless, there was a bitter reproach in this pardon,—an unjust reproach, for Tiennette came back. Her head high, she crossed the empty space between her and Jacques. When she reached him, she kneeled down in the mud, and, like Magdalen to the Christ, she kissed his feet, crying: "Pardon! pardon! pardon!" and sobbing wildly.

"Pardon, yes," replied Jacques gently, "but on one condition. It is that you will put on my grave a black wooden cross, and write on it, 'Here lies a bad fellow.'"

"Oh! Jacques, Jacques," murmured Tiennette, burying her face in her hands. "You were too great for us."

At this moment the major looked at his watch, threw away his cigarette and turned. Occupied with his officers, he had certainly seen nothing of what was going on, for, perceiving Jacques between the two soldiers, he cried:

"What are you doing there?"

"Why," replied Jacques, "you see. I am waiting."

"What?"

"To be shot, and if it suits you just as well, to be shot at once. I should rather not wait."

"Did you take that man's place?"

"It seems so."

"You mean to die in his place?"

"Listen, major. I have no children, you see."

There was in these few words, in the tone in which they were said, such a sublime resignation, such a bitter regret of a whole life wasted, so many suppressed tears, that the major involuntarily straightened up and gave a military salute to the man about to die.

About to die? Even to this soldier the thing seemed impossible. With a gesture the major dismissed his men. Turning to Jacques, he said briefly, "Be off with you! Don't let me see you again."

A cheer went up from the crowd. "Silence!" cried the major, "or I will set fire to the four corners of the village." He felt, as it were, a secret rage to be conquered by a peasant.

An hour after, the soldiers were gone. The people of Vaudoy had returned to their homes gossiping about this incredible adventure, the dénouement of which was easy to foresee. In the early spring following, Jacques and Tiennette were married, and if any one had thought of saying he was a bad fellow, Claude Pichard, at the risk of three months in prison in his turn, would have thrashed him soundly.

The great novelists used to write few short stories, and those that they wrote were seldom preserved in the complete editions of their works. The following merry little sketch by Charles Reade bears many of his familiar earmarks, and yet thousands of the readers of ROMANCE, who have admired for years "Christie Johnstone" and "Very Hard Cash," have never seen this story before.

THE BOX TUNNEL.

THE fifteen-minutes-past-ten train glided from Paddington, May 7, 1847. In the left compartment of a certain first-class carriage were four passengers; of these, singularly enough, two were worth description. The lady had a smooth, white, delicate brow, strongly marked eyebrows, long lashes, eyes that seemed to change color, and a good-sized, delicious mouth, with teeth as white as milk. A man could not see her nose from her eyes and mouth; her own sex could, and would have told us some nonsense about it. She wore an unpretending grayish dress, buttoned to the throat with lozenge-shaped buttons, and a Scotch shawl that agreeably evaded the responsibility of color. She was like a duck, so tight her plain feathers fitted her; and there she sat, smooth, snug and delicious, with a book in her hand and a *soupçon* of her snowy wrist just visible as she held it.

Her opposite neighbor was what I call a good-style man—the more to his credit, since he belonged to a corporation that frequently turn out the worst imaginable young men. He was a cavalry officer aged twenty-five. He had a mustache, but not a very repulsive one; it was far from being one of those subnasal pig-tails, on which soup is suspended like dew on a shrub—it was short, thick, and black as a coal. His teeth had not yet been turned by tobacco smoke to the color of tobacco juice; his clothes did not stick to or hang on him—they sat on him; he had an engaging

smile, and, what I liked the dog for, his vanity, which was inordinate, was in its proper place, his heart, not in his face, jostling mine, and other people's, who have none: in a word, he was what one oftener hears of than meets—*a young gentleman.* He was conversing in an animated whisper with his companion, a fellow-officer —they talked about, what is far better not to do, women. Our friend clearly did not wish to be overheard, for he cast ever and anon a furtive glance at his fair *vis-a-vis*, and lowered his voice. She seemed completely absorbed in her book, and that reassured him. At last the two soldiers came down to a low whisper (the truth must be told), and the one who got down at Slough, and was lost to posterity, bet ten pounds to three that he who was going down with us to Bath and immortality would not kiss either of the ladies opposite upon the road. "Done!" "Done!" Now I am sorry a man I have hitherto praised should have lent himself, even in a whisper, to such speculation, but "nobody is wise at all hours," not even when the clock is striking five-and-twenty; and you are to consider his profession, his good looks, and the temptation—ten to three.

After Slough the party was reduced to three; at Twyford one lady dropped her handkerchief; Captain Dolignan fell on it like a tiger, and returned it like a lamb. Two or three words were interchanged on that occasion. At Reading, the Marlborough of our tale made one of the safe investments of the day—he bought a "Times" and a "Punch"; the latter was full of steel-pen thrusts and wood-cuts. Valor and beauty deigned to laugh at some infatuated humbug or other punctured by Punch. Now laughing together thaws our human ice; long before Swindon it was a talking match; at Swindon, who so devoted as Captain Dolignan—he handed them out—he souped them—he tough-chickened them — he brandied and cochinealed one, and he brandied and burnt-sugared the other; on their return to the carriage, one lady passed into the inner compartment to inspect a certain gentleman's seat on that side of the line.

Reader, had it been you or I, the beauty would have been the deserter, the average one would have stayed with us till all was blue, ourselves included; not more surely does our slice of bread and butter when it escapes from our hand, revolve it ever so often, alight face downward on the carpet. But this was a bit of a fop, Adonis, dragoon—so Venus remained in *tête-à-tête* with him. Presently our captain looked out of a window. "We are only a mile from the Box Tunnel."

"Do you always laugh a mile from the Box Tunnel?" said the lady.

"Invariably."

"What for?"

"Why! hem! it is a gentleman's joke."

"Oh! I don't mind its being silly if it makes me laugh."

Captain Dolignan thus encouraged, recounted to Miss Haythorn the following:

"A lady and her husband sat together going through the Box Tunnel—there was one gentleman opposite; it was pitch dark. After the tunnel, the lady said, 'George, how absurd of you to salute going through the tunnel.' 'I did no such thing!' 'You didn't?' 'Me, why?' 'Why, because somehow I thought you did!' " Here Captain Dolignan laughed, and endeavored to lead his companion to laugh, but it was not to be done. The train entered the tunnel.

Miss Haythorn—"Ah!"

Dolignan—"What is the matter?"

Miss H.—"I am frightened."

Dolig.—(Moving to her side,) "Pray, do not be alarmed, I am near you."

Miss H.—"You *are* near me, very near me, indeed, Captain Dolignan."

Dolig.—"You know my name?"

Miss H.—"I heard your friend mention it. I wish we were out of this dark place."

Dolig.—"I could be contented to spend hours here reassuring you, sweet lady."

Miss H.—"Nonsense."

Dolig. —Pweep! (Grave reader, do not put your lips to the cheek of the next pretty creature you meet, or you will understand what this means.)

Miss H. —"Ee!"

Friend—"What is the matter?"

Miss H. —"Open the door! open the door!"

There was a sound of hurried whispers, the door was shut, and the blind pulled down with hostile sharpness.

If any critic falls on me for putting inarticulate sounds in a dialogue as above, I answer with all the insolence I can command at present, "Hit boys as big as yourself," bigger perhaps, such as Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes; they began it, and I learned it of them, sore against my will.

Miss Haythorn's scream lost a part of its effect because the engine whistled forty thousand murders at the same moment; and fictitious grief makes itself heard when real cannot.

Between the tunnel and Bath our young friend had time to ask himself whether his conduct had been marked by that delicate reserve which is supposed to distinguish the perfect gentleman.

With a long face, real or feigned, he held open the door—his late friends attempted to escape on the other side! impossible! they must pass him. She whom he had insulted (Latin for kissed) deposited somewhere at his feet a look of gentle, blushing reproach; the other, whom he had not insulted, darted red-hot daggers at him from her eyes, and so they parted.

It was perhaps, well for Dolignan that he had the grace to be friends with Major Hoskyns of his regiment —a veteran laughed at by the youngsters—for the major was too apt to look coldly upon billiard balls and cigars; he had seen cannon balls and linstocks; he had also, to tell the truth, swallowed a good bit of the mess-room poker, which made it as impossible for Major Hoskyns to descend to an ungentlemanlike word or action as to brush his own trousers below the knee.

Captain Dolignan told this gentleman his story in gleeful accent; but Major Hoskyns heard him coldly, and

as coldly answered that he had known a man to lose his life for the same thing. "That is nothing," continued the major; "but unfortunately he deserved to lose it."

At this the blood mounted to the younger man's temples, and his senior added:

"I mean to say he was thirty-five; you, I presume, are twenty-one?"

"Twenty-five."

"That is much the same thing; will you be advised by me?"

"If you will advise me."

"Speak to no one of this, and send White the three pounds that he may think you have lost the bet."

"That is hard, when I won it."

"Do it for all that, sir?"

Let the disbelievers in human perfectibility know that this dragoon capable of a blush did this virtuous action, albeit with violent reluctance, and this was his first damper. A week after these events he was at a ball, not the first, since his return, *bien-entendu*. He was in that state of factitious discontent which belongs to us English. He was looking in vain for a lady equal in personal atttraction to the idea he had formed of George Dolignan as a man, when suddenly there glided past him a most delightful vision!—a lady whose beauty and symmetry took him by the eyes. Another look! "It can't be!" "Yes, it is!" Miss Haythorn (not that he knew her name), but what an apotheosis!

The duck had become a pea-hen—radiant, dazzling, she looked twice as beautiful, and almost twice as large as before. He lost sight of her. He found her again. She was so lovely she made him ill—and he, alone, must not dance with her, speak to her. If he had been content to begin his acquaintance in the usual way, it might have ended in kissing; but having begun with kissing, it must end in nothing. As she danced, sparks of beauty fell from her on all around, but him—she did not see him; it was clear she never would see him. One gentleman was particularly assiduous; she smiled

on his assiduity; he was ugly, but she smiled on him. Dolignan was surprised at his success, his ill-taste, his ugliness, his impertinence. Dolignan at last found himself injured.

"Who was this man? and what right had he to go on so? He had never kissed her, I suppose," said Dolly. Dolignan could not prove it, but he felt that somehow the rights of property were invaded. He went home and dreamed of Miss Haythorn, hated all the ugly successful. He spent a fortnight trying to find out who this beauty was—he never could encounter her again. At last he heard of her, in this way:—a lawyer's clerk paid him a little visit and commenced a little action against him, in the name of Miss Haythorn, for insulting her in a railway train.

The young gentleman was shocked, and endeavored to soften the lawyer's clerk; that machine did not thoroughly comprehend the meaning of the term. The lady's name, however, was at least revealed by this untoward incident; from her name to her address was but a short step, and the same day our crest-fallen hero lay in wait at her door—and many a succeeding day without effect. But one fine afternoon she issued forth quite naturally, as if she did it every day, and walked briskly on the nearest parade. Dolignan did the same; he met and passed her many times on the parade, and searched for pity in her eyes, but found neither look nor recognition, nor any other sentiment; for all this, she walked and walked, till all the other promenaders were tired and gone. Then her culprit summoned resolution, and, taking off his hat, with a voice tremulous for the first time, besought permission to address her. She stopped, blushed, and neither acknowledged nor disowned his acquaintance. He blushed, stammered out how ashamed he was, how he deserved to be punished, how he *was* punished, how little she knew how unhappy he was; and concluded by begging her not to let all the world know the disgrace of a man, who was already mortified enough by the loss of her acquaintance. She asked an explanation; he told her

the action had been commenced in her name. She gently shrugged her shoulders, and said:

"How stupid they are!"

Emboldened by this, he begged to know whether or not a life of distant unpretending devotion would, after a lapse of years, erase the memory of his madness—his crime.

"She did not know——!"

"She must now bid him adieu, as she had some preparations to make for a ball in the Crescent, where *everybody was to be.*"

They parted; and Dolignan determined to be at the ball, where everybody was to be. He was there, and after some time he obtained an introduction to Miss Haythorn, and he danced with her. Her manner was gracious. With the wonderful tact of her sex, she seemed to have commenced the acquaintance that evening. That night, for the first time, Dolignan was in love. I will spare the reader all a lover's arts, by which he succeeded in dining where she dined, in dancing where she danced, in overtaking her, by accident, when she rode. His devotion followed her even to church, where our dragoon was rewarded by learning there is a world where they neither polk nor smoke—the two capital abominations of this one.

He made acquaintance with her uncle, who liked him, and saw at last, with joy, that her eye loved to dwell upon him, when she thought he did not observe her.

It was three months after the Box Tunnel that Captain Dolignan called one day upon Captain Haythorn, R. N., whom he had met twice in his life, and slightly propitiated by violently listening to a cutting-out expedition; he called, and in the usual way asked permission to pay his addresses to his daughter. The worthy captain straightway began doing quarter-deck, when suddenly he was summoned from the apartment by a mysterious message. On his return, he announced, with a total change of voice, that "it was all right, and

his visitor might run alongside as soon as he chose." My reader has divined the truth; this nautical commander, terrible to the foe, was in complete and happy subjugation to his daughter—our heroine.

As he was taking leave, Dolignan saw his divinity glide into the drawing-room. He followed her, observed a sweet consciousness which encouraged him; that consciousness deepened into confusion—she tried to laugh—she cried instead, and then she smiled again: and when he kissed her hand at the door, it was "George" and "Marian," instead of Captain this and Miss the other. A reasonable time after this (for my tale is merciful and skips formalities and torturing delays) these two were happy—they were once more upon the railroad, going to enjoy their honey-moon all by themselves. Marian Dolignan was dressed just as before—duck-like and delicious; all bright, except her clothes; but George sat beside her this time, instead of opposite; and she drank him in gently, from under her long eyelashes. "Marian," said George, "married people should tell each other all. Will you ever forgive me if I own to you—no—" "Yes! yes!"

"Well, then, you remember the Box Tunnel" (this was the first allusion he had ventured to it). "I am ashamed to say—I had bet three pounds to ten pounds with White, I would kiss one of you two ladies," and George, pathetic externally, chuckled within.

"I know that, George; I overheard you," was the demure reply.

"Oh! you overheard me? impossible."

"And did you not hear me whisper to my companion? I made a bet with her."

"You made a bet; how singular! What was it?"

"Only a pair of gloves, George."

"Yes, I know; but what about it?"

"That if you did, you should be my husband, dearest."

"Oh!—but stay—then you could not have been so very angry with me, love; why, dearest, then who brought that action against me?"

Mrs. Dolignan looked down.

"I was afraid you were forgetting me! George, you will never forgive me!"

"Sweet angel—why, here is the Box Tunnel!"

Now, reader—fie! no! no such thing! You can't expect to be indulged in this way, every time we come to a dark place: besides, it is not the thing. Consider, two sensible married people—no such phenomenon, I assure you, took place. No scream issued in hopeless rivalry of the engine this time.

It is not a new idea that one's bread may often profitably be cast upon the waters, but this idea is seldom so beautifully and touchingly employed in literature as in the following thrilling story by Arthur Dourliac. It was translated by Isabel Smithson for the New York *Home Journal.*

PROCONSUL CARRIER.

I.

Count Clairville has just given in marriage his only daughter Yolande to the Marquis of Kergouet, of an old and proud Breton family.

The ceremony was over and the church doors were flung open, displaying the high altar decorated with flowers and lights, and in the garlanded doorway appeared the young pair, while the bells pealed joyously. All nature seemed to be in festal attire, for the sweet odors of spring filled the air, the wild birds were singing merrily, and sunbeams fell like a halo across the foreheads of the bride and groom. She was fair and graceful, and in her white gown and veil seemed like an angel strayed from heaven; the bridegroom, noble and gallant, looked with love unutterable at the fair girl who leaned upon his arm.

The country people were dressed in their Sunday clothes, the men wearing rosettes in their button-holes, the women with lilies-of-the-valley in their bodices, and all waved flowering hawthorn branches, and made the air ring with acclamations.

"Long live Mademoiselle Yolande! Long live the bride! God bless our sweet young lady!" they cried, and from time to time they added, "Long live the Marquis!"

The church of Clairville overlooked the village, being built on a rocky eminence, and was approached by a steep winding path and stairway; rich and poor, noble and simple, dead and living, all must enter the church by way of "Paradise Road." The wedding

party, glittering in gold and silver and velvet, and followed by the cheering crowd, walked down this rustic pathway to where the carriages were waiting, and the bridegroom, pleased by the enthusiasm of the people and their evident affection for his bride, said to her tenderly:

"You see, my love, how dear you are to these people. They will never forget you. I fear they owe me a grudge for stealing their good angel from them."

The bride smiled and raised her sweet eyes to his face for a moment, and then she turned to her father, saying:

"It is such a beautiful day, papa; may we not walk home?"

"Certainly, dear, if you wish it," he replied, glad of the opportunity of pleasing his child, from whom he must soon be parted; and accordingly the bridal pair, and all the young persons of the party, walked through the village to the chateau of Clairville, which was situated at the other end, while the dowagers and other persons followed in their carriages.

Yolande, leaning on her husband's arm, stopped repeatedly at the humble cottages where the poor old men and women, whom age or infirmity rendered unable to go out, were waiting in their doorways to see the bride pass. For each one she had a word or a smile, and many a trembling hand and weak, thin voice was raised to bless her.

The joyous procession now reached a turn in the narrow road and came to a standstill, being met by a funeral party. It was a very poor affair; there was no coronet emblazoned on the white pall which covered the corpse of a young maiden, and not a flower was seen there, not a single blossom, in spite of the warm spring time! Behind the bier a poorly-clad man, the only mourner, walked slowly, looking, with his head bent and his face covered by his hands, a picture of despairing grief. At sight of the Clairville wedding party, the men carrying the bier stopped and would have turned out of the road, but the mourner raised his head

and gazed fiercely at the happy throng, who with their rich gala clothing and smiling faces seemed to offer insult to sorrow.

"Go on!" he said in a hoarse voice to the porters, as if he would have liked to crush the fine lords and ladies beneath his feet, but the men did not stir. Then the count stepped forward, saying gravely,—

"Respect the dead, friends! Fall back and let the bier pass."

He was instantly obeyed, and the funeral moved on past the gorgeously attired throng, who made way reverently, the ladies crossing themselves and the lords removing their hats. As the bier passed the bride, she was filled with pity at the sight of the young, still form under the white pall, and taking a sprig of orange blossoms out of her bouquet, she laid it gently upon the bier. The stern mourner saw the act, and his expression softened a little; then, covering his face again, he broke into low sobs.

"Who is that man?" asked Count Clairville.

"I don't know, my lord," replied the man addressed. "He is a stranger. He came to the inn a few days ago with his sister. She was almost dead, as any one could see. He seemed to love her very much, and when she died, he cursed like a heretic and shook his fist at heaven. This morning I told him it was too early to have the funeral, and that he ought to give the curé time to change his stole after the wedding, but he would not listen to me."

The bridal party moved on, and soon the merry peals of the church bells were changed to a mournful tolling, as the bier passed under the gay floral decorations of the door.

"Who is that young lady?" asked the mourner of a bystander.

"The bride? That is Mademoiselle Yolande de Clairville," was the reply, and the stranger murmured softly,—

"May she always be happy!"

Then he went into the church.

II.

Twenty years passed and the Reign of Terror began. In La Vendée the war was at its height, when the Convention sent one of its members to Nantes with instructions to take swift and violent measures against the Royalists.

Accordingly this man, Carrier by name, caused a large number of "suspects" to be confined in the Entrepot, a building near the Cathedral of St. Pierre; men, women, and children were hustled pell-mell into this ante-chamber of the River Loire, and, in spite of the daily drownings, the prison was ever thronged with victims.

In a large, low hall the terrible proconsul presided at the mock trials. The prisoners were divided into two parties, the accused and the condemned; the former group diminished rapidly as the latter increased, and at last Carrier resolved to hurry the proceedings by dispensing with all formality in disposing of the victims.

Then the fatal words, "Condemned to death!" were heard repeatedly, as the Royalists were hurried across the hall.

"Henri de Kergouet!" called the clerk, and a young man about eighteen years of age left his companions and advanced toward the tribunal. He bowed to the judge with as much ease and grace as if he were at the Court of Versailles, and seemed to be unconscious of the fact that a cruel death awaited him.

"You are accused of conspiring against the Republic in the person of its representative," said Carrier; "you took part in a plot against my life."

The youth turned a frank, fearless pair of eyes toward the speaker, and answered slowly:

"I owe my father's death to you. I always pay my debts."

"Henri!" cried a woman's voice entreatingly.

Carrier cast a furious glance round him, and then Henri de Kergouet was hurried away. Two women

now stood before the judge, who asked of the elder one,—

"Are you the mother of that young man?"

"I am," she answered; "and this girl is his sister."

"Your name?"

"Yolande de Clairville, Marquise de Kergouet."

The judge looked fixedly at the speaker for a minute, then declared the investigation at an end, and added briefly,—

"Condemned to death, all three."

The doomed were now led back to their dungeons, and at nine o'clock at night the executions began. Tied together, two by two, the unfortunates were thrown into the boats, taken out on the river, and despatched with sword or bayonet, and their bodies cast into the water. This method, however, soon proved too slow to satisfy Carrier, and he caused hundreds of his victims to be driven out to a neighboring quarry and shot.

The Marquise de Kergouet and her two children were awaiting their doom in silence, when the jailer entered their cell and ordered the daughter to follow him.

"Why must we be separated?" cried the mother.

"Citizen Carrier's orders," replied the man. "Be quick!"

After a long and tearful embrace the young girl left her mother and brother, and followed the jailer into the presence of the dreadful proconsul, who looked at her earnestly, and, when they were left alone, asked slowly,—

"What is your name?"

"Yvonne de Kergouet."

"Do you love your mother?"

"Ah, yes, monsieur!" replied the girl, trembling with terror.

"And your brother; what would you do to save his life?"

"I would gladly give my own life!" cried Yvonne, eagerly.

"I do not want your life, child, but your silence. How old are you?"

"Sixteen years, monsieur."

"Then you have not yet learned to lie. Listen to me. Here is a letter which I confide to you on condition of your promising me that it shall not be opened until midnight. Moreover, you are not to speak of it to any one. Have I your promise? Very well. Go!"

The frightened girl took the letter, put it into her bosom, and was taken back to the cell, but before she had time to reply to the anxious questioning with which her mother and brother greeted her, a man appeared, carrying a pistol, signed to them all to follow him, and led them out of the prison. Then imposing the strictest silence upon them, he gave his arm to Yvonne, while Henri de Kergouet supported his mother's trembling form. In a few minutes the little party reached the river bank, after hurrying through the dark streets of the city, and the Royalists realized at a glance that they were not far from the spot where the executions of that day had taken place. Their guide gave a signal, and a man in a boat instantly made his appearance from out of the gloom.

"Get in," said the boatman, in a low tone, and as soon as they were seated, he rowed out into the middle of the stream.

"Be brave, little sister," whispered Henri, clasping Yvonne to his heart, and then they all waited calmly for their last hour to come. In a few brief moments they seemed to live their whole lives over, to feel again the joys and sorrows of their early childhood, as well as their recent trials and alarms.

Suddenly they saw in the distance the outline of a ship dimly defined against the dark sky; they approached it rapidly, and before they had recovered from their amazement found themselves on board, while their late conductor rowed back to the shore.

"What does this mean?" asked Henri, after an astonished pause.

"That you are saved!" replied the captain of the ship.

"Saved? How? By whom?"

"That is more than I can tell you, madame. All that I know of the matter is that a few hours ago I received a large sum of money and an order to wait here for three passengers who wished to go to England. The order was accompanied by a safe-conduct signed by the proconsul, Carrier. In a few days we shall, with a good wind, be in sight of the English coast."

The little family hardly able to believe their ears, looked at each other in wondering delight, and Madame de Kergouet murmured with a prayer of thanksgiving,—

"Who can our unknown friend be?"

Then Yvonne suddenly asked the captain what the hour was.

"It is just half-past twelve, mademoiselle," he answered, and the girl hastily drew out the letter she had received, tore it open, and read the first line,—

"To Mademoiselle Yolande de Clairville."

"It is for you, mamma," she said, giving it to her mother; but the marquise signed to her son to read it aloud. It ran as follows,—

Twenty years ago, on your wedding-day, you laid a flower from your bridal bouquet on my sister's coffin. She was just sixteen years old. I wish to pay my debt, and in return for your flower I give you three lives.

CARRIER.

It is true that among all nations, and even in our own favored land, a dowry for a bride is regarded as desirable. To realize how superior we are to other peoples in this respect, however, one needs only to read stories like the following, by Hippolyte Etiennez, in which the stress laid upon the bride's dowry defines, more strongly than could any mere statement, the difference between our own and the Continental countries. The story has been translated from the French for ROMANCE by Mary Cruger. The attention of all dwellers in cities is respectfully called to the streets of Broek. How delightful it must be to live in a town famed for the cleanliness of its streets!

A DOWRY OF HERRINGS.

It was the twentieth of January, 1795. The French army had entered Amsterdam, and the soldiers waited in groups in the square where they had stacked their guns, to have their lodgings assigned them.

Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, the inhabitants had left their houses, and were collecting in the streets to welcome this liberating army. The greatest enthusiasm reigned in the city, and in the evening every house was illuminated.

Near the Admiralty, however, stood one house whose dark and silent aspect contrasted strangely with the brilliant exterior of its neighbors. A narrow court-yard enclosed in a high wall, with a porte-cochére, intervened between the street and the house, and all the doors and blinds were now closely secured. This was the house of Master Woerden.

Master Woerden was a rich Dutch merchant. Entirely taken up with his commercial affairs, he was totally indifferent to the political events which so interested his countrymen; besides which he too thoroughly understood domestic economy to waste candles after the prodigal fashion of his neighbors.

At this moment Master Woerden was seated in a comfortable arm-chair in front of a blazing fire. His

fur-bordered robe was folded across his chest, and his wolf-skin cap was pressed down upon his brow, whose few scattered gray hairs offered no protection from the sharp currents of frosty air that found entrance at every opening of the door.

On a table near him stood a polished brass lamp, a large pitcher of beer, and a clay pipe. In the chimney-corner an old servant, whose extreme *embonpoint* betrayed her Flemish origin, occupied herself with occasionally stirring and feeding the open fire.

Presently the door-bell rang, and the servant rose quickly to answer it. A few moments later a young man entered, who threw his cloak on a sofa, and approached the old man.

"Is it you, William?" exclaimed Master Woerden. "I had not expected you so early!"

"I left Broek this morning," he replied with a respectful salutation, "but the roads are so cumbered with soldiers and fugitives, that it has taken me all day to get here."

"Did you see Van Elberg?"

The young man drank a glass of beer and sat down by the fire before answering this question.

"Yes, sir!" he said slowly, "Master Van Elberg consents to the marriage, but he refuses to give his daughter more than four thousand ducats as her dowry."

"Ah!" cried Master Woerden, frowning heavily, "then he may keep both his daughter and her dowry."

"But, father: let me——"

"Hold your tongue, William; at your age one would sacrifice everything to love, but let me tell you, love fades away, while money remains."

"But Master Van Elberg is one of the richest merchants in Holland; and what he will not give his daughter in his lifetime will surely come to her at his death."

"What then? Am not I as rich as he? Listen to me, my son. You will one day succeed me in my business. Remember then these two axioms; never give more than you receive, and do nothing for the sole benefit of

others. These are good rules for marriage as well as for commerce."

"But——"

"Let the matter rest, my son. We will not speak further of it now."

William knew the self-willed obstinacy of his father too well to reply, and sat still in great sorrow and perplexity, while the old man calmly smoked his pipe.

Again the door-bell rang, and the dogs in the court-yard began to bark furiously.

"Ah!" said Master Woerden, "it must be some stranger. Look out of the window, William, and see who it is."

The young man did so, saying in tones of surprise:

"It is a mounted militiaman, father!"

Presently the old servant brought in a letter, which Master Woerden received with an air of great disquietude; but on tearing open the envelope with impatient fingers, his face assumed its wonted expression of serenity as he read the enclosure.

"That is well!" he said, as he handed the letter to his son.

It was a requisition from the government for four hundred thousand herrings to be delivered within a month for the use of the French army.

"William!" exclaimed the old man, after a moment's reflection, "I have an idea! You shall marry Van Elberg's daughter, and she shall have a good dowry, too."

"Can it be possible?"

"Leave it to me. As the canals are all closed by the ice, be ready with two saddle horses at daylight to-morrow. Ah! my son! if you only inherit your father's genius!"

The next morning the rising sun saw the two travellers on their way to Broek. They arrived about midday; but were obliged to leave their horses at an inn outside the village, as neither horses nor carriages were permitted to enter its streets. Broek enjoys in Holland an extraordinary reputation for neatness. The streets are

paved with polished stones in different colors, which are arranged in mosaic designs. In front of each house is a space reserved for the use of its inhabitants, which is enclosed by an iron railing with bright ornaments of brass, and furnished with settees of carved wood. So great is the mania for cleanliness that a withered leaf cannot fall in one of these elegant parquets without the family's rushing out in the utmost haste to remove it.

When Master Woerden and his son arrived with snow-laden shoes, many covert glances of indignation followed their progress towards Master Van Elberg's house; but as they were at once well-known and greatly respected, no open remonstrance was made. On reaching their destination, however, the servant met them at the door with slippers in hand that they might leave their heavy shoes outside.

When the travellers entered the parlor, not only Master Van Elberg but his charming daughter also received them with much cordiality.

Clotilda wore the costume of her country. The short, full skirt richly decorated with embroidery, the velvet bodice, and the dainty cap with its border of lace, the gold band across her dark hair, and the heavy gold earrings, thickly set with jewels, made a picturesque garb that daintily set off her fair, placid features.

"Good morning, Master Woerden!" cried Van Elberg as he held out his hand cheerily to his visitor. "You are welcome. Have the French scared you away from Amsterdam?"

"They have not troubled me in the least," replied Woerden. "You know I care as little for the French as for the Prince of Orange. Politics never interest me. I come to propose a good speculation."

"That is well! What is it?" returned Van Elberg.

"I have engaged to deliver four hundred thousand herrings in a month. Can you furnish them to me in three weeks?"

"At what price?"

"Ten florins a thousand."

"Ten florins?—Yes! I will undertake to supply them."

"Good!" returned Woerden, rubbing his hands together contentedly, as the dining-room door was now opened, displaying the plentiful breakfast which awaited them.

After partaking liberally of the good things before him, for the long ride had sharpened his appetite, Master Woerden glanced significantly at the young girl, who shyly turned her eyes away from him, as he began to discuss the question of the young folks' marriage. Finding his host firmly insisting on giving his daughter only the dowry he had before fixed, Master Woerden made but a feigned remonstrance to these terms, and in the end conceded the disputed point. It was then decided the marriage should take place in eight days.

As they returned to Amsterdam the next day, William ventured to ask his father why he had thus agreed to Master Van Elberg's terms.

"My son!" replied Master Woerden gravely, "do not disturb me about trifles. This contract for herrings is a serious matter, and requires all my thoughts."

Once more in his own house, Master Woerden shut himself up for hours in his own room; and when he at length came forth, he gave his servant a large package of letters to mail.

Three days later, the old man, with his wrinkled face all alight with triumph, whispered to his son:

"Ah! William! I have your dowry all ready for you!"

On the day appointed for the wedding Master Woerden and his son returned to Broek. This time they were received with great ceremony. The wide folding-doors that are only opened for christenings, weddings, and funerals, were drawn apart, and a large party of friends and relatives was assembled. The master of the house, however, came to meet them with so pale and troubled a countenance that William feared he had some bad news to make known. Master Woerden did

not share his son's alarm, for he knew only too surely the cause of his host's distress.

"What troubles you, dear friend?" he said with a hypocritical smile. "You look anxious and worried!"

"Ah! I am cruelly embarrassed! I must speak with you at once!"

"Can it be this marriage that displeases you? Do you wish to retract your consent?"

"Oh, no!"

"Well then, let us go on with the ceremony; when that is over, and your friends are amusing themselves, we can speak at our ease of other matters!"

Master Van Elberg hesitated. He would gladly have put all else aside till his distress of mind was explained; but seeing also how much wiser it would be to take the advice thus given him, he gave the signal for the marriage to go on.

A few moments later, the wedded pair were kneeling at the altar to receive the church's blessing on their union, and immediately on the return of the party to the house, Master Van Elberg hurried his guest into his private room.

"My friend!" he said anxiously, as soon as he had closed the door, "I have engaged to deliver four hundred thousand herrings to you in fifteen days, and I have not yet succeeded in getting a single one. They are all sold."

"Of course they are!" cried Master Woerden with a burst of laughter; "I have myself bought them!"

Ah!" cried Van Elberg, after staring a moment at his companion in utter amazement. "What then do you expect——"

"That you will fulfil your engagement. Listen to me, my friend! You will one day leave your daughter a large fortune, and I shall do as much for my son. That is all very well for the future; but for to-day they are not on equal terms. I shall give my son a share in my business, but you give your daughter only four thousand ducats. I have not wished to disappoint our children's hopes, but I have planned to compel you to be more just in your arrangements."

While Master Woerden thus spoke, his companion was becoming more and more bewildered.

"This is what I have done!" continued the merchant of Amsterdam; "you have engaged to sell me these herrings at ten florins a thousand, but I already have them. You can only retrieve your honor by buying them from me. I will sell them to you for fifty florins a thousand. Thus, you will pay me sixteen thousand florins, and we are quits."

"It is well!" replied Van Elberg, who had now regained control of his scattered wits. "You are a skilful merchant, and have caught me finely."

He bowed ceremoniously to his companion, turned to his desk and drew up a check for the required sum, which he handed to Master Woerden with another bow.

The two fathers then returned to the parlor, to take part in the wedding festivities.

Eight days later the merchant of Broek came to visit his daughter, who now lived with her husband at Amsterdam. He found Master Woerden in great tribulation.

"Ah! friend Van Elberg!" he cried in despair. "What shall I do? The fishermen are bringing in my herrings, and I cannot find a single cask to pack them in! They will all be spoiled!"

"Ah!" returned Van Elberg coldly. "You bought up all the herrings, and I have bought all the casks. I could sell them to you at an exorbitant price, but as I wish to keep my word about giving my daughter her dowry of four thousand ducats, I will only charge you the amount you so skilfully made out of me in the other matter. You are very cunning, you merchants of Amsterdam, but we of Broek have positive genius, you see."

"But you got the idea from me!" responded Master Woerden proudly.

There is nothing which delights the Germans like a mystery. In the following tender little sketch by the distinguished Theodor Körner this love of mysticism is fully gratified. The tale is more like a dream than a creation. It has been translated for "ROMANCE" by Katharine P. McAssey.

THE SHATTERED HARP.

THE Secretary and his young wife were yet in the glamour of their honeymoon. No considerations of convenience, no passing inclination, had united them. Love, ardent and proved by years of patient waiting, was the seal of their union. They had known each other as little children, and their hopes and plans had grown together; but Sellner's uncertain position forced him to postpone for a long time the fulfillment of his hopes. At last he received his appointment, and on the following Sunday he led his bride into their new home. When the long, tiresome days of congratulations and family feasts were ended, how gladly they spent the beautiful evenings together, with no third person to claim any share in their joy! Plans for coming days filled the hours. They were both of them fine musicians, and Sellner's flute and Josephe's harp made sweet music during the enchanted evenings, which sped all too quickly. The deep harmony of their instruments was an auspicious omen for their future.

One evening, after they had played long together, Josephe complained of a violent headache. It had begun in the morning, and the day's work and the evening's pleasure had wrought seriously upon her delicate nerves. Sellner sent at once for a physician; he came, treated the matter as a trifle, and assured them that she would be quite recovered in the morning. But after an extremely restless night, during which she raved incessantly, the doctor found poor Josephe with the symptoms of a nervous fever. He devoted himself zealously to the case, but Josephe grew worse daily. Sellner was

beside himself. On the ninth day the physician lost hope, and Josephe herself felt that she could not live much longer. She awaited the end with gentle resignation.

"Dear Edward," she said to her husband, "with deep sorrow I leave this beautiful earth, where I have found thee and highest blessedness; but though I may not linger longer in thine arms, Josephe's love shall be round about thee until we meet again, above."

She sank back, and fell asleep. It was in the evening at the ninth hour.

Sellner's sorrow was unspeakable. He struggled long with life. His grief destroyed his health, and when, after many weeks, he arose from his sick-bed, he was without a vestige of his former youthful vigor. Deep melancholy fastened upon him. He had left Josephe's room as it was before her death, and every evening he made a pilgrimage to this sanctuary of his love. Hither on a clear moonlight night he came, and stood, as in the time of his happiness, leaning upon her window. Into the sweet tones of the flute he breathed his yearnings toward her who had gone. Suddenly, from a neighboring tower, the watchman cried the ninth hour. As if struck by a light spirit hand, the harp answered to his flute.

Overcome with awe, Sellner ceased playing upon the flute; the strains of the harp also ceased. With deep emotion, he now began Josephe's favorite song, and the strings sent forth strong, loud notes in accompaniment to his melody. He sank to the floor with a shudder of joy, and stretched out his arms to embrace the beloved shadow. He felt himself breathed upon as by the warmth of spring, and a pale, shimmering light shone round him.

"I know thee, blessed shadow of my sainted Josephe!" he cried. "Thou didst promise in love to be round about me! Thou dost keep thy word! I feel thy breath; thy kisses upon my lips! Thy glory shines upon me!"

Again he took the flute, and the harp again sounded

forth, but more and more gently, until its whisperings were lost in one long, final chord.

Sellner cast himself upon his couch. In all his heated dreams he heard the whispering of the harp. He awoke late, and wearied from the emotion of the night. He felt the touch of a supernatural hand upon his life, and within him there was a strange voice. It prophesied the speedy victory of the soul over the body.

With unutterable longing he waited for the evening. At twilight, he betook himself to Josephe's room. Playing upon his flute, he lulled himself into still dreams until the ninth hour. Hardly had the last clock-stroke ceased, before the harp again sent forth its strains to meet and blend with the flute-tunes in perfect accord. Again, the pale, shimmering light shone round him. Again he cried out to his loved one, "Josephe, Josephe! Take me with thee!" Again the harp-strains took leave of him in gentle whisperings.

Sellner tottered back to his room. His looks terrified his faithful servant, who hastened, in spite of his master's prohibitions, to the physician, who was also a life-long friend of Sellner. The physician found him in a fever, with the very symptoms which had appeared in Frau Sellner's malady. The fever increased during the night. He raved ever of Josephe and the harp.

In the morning he was quieter; the struggle was over; he felt assured of speedy release. He revealed to the physician the occurrences of both evenings, and no arguments of cold reason could dissuade him from his belief. As evening came on, he grew weaker, and asked at last to be taken into Josephe's room. They did his bidding. He looked about him at each beloved object with tears of joy, and spoke with certainty of the ninth hour as his last upon earth. The fatal moment drew near. He said farewell to all who were gathered around him, and asked to be left alone with the physician.

Nine hollow strokes groaned forth from the castle tower, and Sellner's face shone with a heavenly light.

"Josephe!" he cried with ineffable joy, as if God's

hand had touched him, "Josephe, greet me once more ere I go, that I may know thou art near, and may overcome death by thy love!"

Then the harp-strings vibrated in splendid, triumphant strains, like pæans.

"I come, I come!" he cried, and, sinking back, struggled with life. The harp tones grew soft and gentle, but lost no sweetness nor clearness. Suddenly Sellner's struggle ended, and the strings snapped asunder. Were they torn by a supernatural hand?

The physician was bowed down in an ecstasy of awe. He closed the eyes of his friend and left the house. After years of silence concerning Sellner's death—a silence which he dreaded to break—he communicated these things to a few trusted friends, and showed the harp, which he had been unwilling to leave to the mercy of rude hands.

A rollicking Irish story never comes amiss, and no one ever wrote better ones than the great Irish novelist, William Carleton. Below is given a characteristic production from his pen. He must not be confounded with our own poet of the same name.

CONDY CULLEN.

Young Condy Cullen was descended from a long line of private distillers, and, of course, exhibited in his own person all the practical wit, sagacity, cunning, and fertility of invention, which the natural genius of the family, sharpened by long experience, had created from generation to generation, as a standing capital to be handed down from father to son. There was scarcely a trick, evasion, plot or manœuvre that had ever been resorted to by his ancestors, that Condy had not at his finger ends; and though but a lad of sixteen at the time we present him to the reader, yet be it observed that he had had his mind, even at that age, admirably trained, by four or five years of keen vigorous practice, in all the resources necessary to meet the subtle vigilance and stealthy circumvention of that prowling animal—a gauger.

It might be very amusing to detail, from time to time, a few of those keen encounters of practical cunning, which take place between the poteen distiller and his lynx-eyed foe, the gauger. They are curious as throwing light upon the national character of our people, and as evidences of the surprising readiness of wit, fertility of invention, and irresistible humor, which they mix up with almost every actual concern of life, no matter how difficult or critical it may be. Nay, it mostly happens that the character of the peasant in all its fulness rises in proportion to what he is called upon to encounter, and that the laugh at or the hoax upon the gauger keeps pace with the difficulty that is overcome. But now to our short story.

Two men in the garb of gentlemen were riding along a remote by-road, one morning in the month of October, about the year 1827, or '28. They had nearly reached a turn in the way, which skirted the brow of a small declivity that lay on the right. In point of fact, it was a moderately inclined plane or slope rather than a declivity; but be this as it may, the flat at its foot was studded over with furze bushes, which grew so close and level that a person might almost imagine it possible to walk upon their surface. On coming within about two hundred and fifty yards of this angle, the horsemen noticed a lad not more than sixteen, jogging on toward them, with a keg upon his back. The eye of one of them was immediately lit with that vivacious sparkling of habitual sagacity which marks the practised gauger among ten thousand. For a single moment he drew up his horse, an action which, however slight in itself, intimated more plainly than he could have wished, the obvious interest which had just been excited in him. Short as was the pause, it betrayed him, for no sooner had the lad noticed it than he crossed the ditch and disappeared round the angle we have mentioned, and upon the side of the declivity. To gallop to the spot, dismount, cross the ditch also, and pursue him, was only the work of a few minutes.

"We have him," said the gauger, "we have him—one thing is clear, that he cannot escape us."

"Speak for yourself, Stinton," replied his companion. "As for me, not being an officer of his Majesty's Excise, I decline taking any part in the pursuit—it is a fair battle, so fight it out between you." He had scarcely concluded, when they heard a voice singing the following lines, in a spirit of that hearty hilarity which betokens a cheerful contempt of care:

> "Oh! Jemmy she sez, you are my true lover,
> You are all the riches that I do adore;
> I solemnly swear now, I'll never have anoder,
> My heart it is fixed to never love more."

The music then changed to a joyous whistle, and immediately they were confronted by a lad, dressed in an

old red coat, patched with gray frieze, who, on seeing them, exhibited in his features a most ingenuous air of natural surprise. He immediately ceased to whistle, and with every mark of respect, putting his hand to his hat, said in a voice, the tones of which spoke of kindness and deference:

"God save ye, gintlemen."

"I say, my lad," said the gauger, "where is that customer with the keg on his back?—he crossed over there this moment."

"When, where, sir?" said the lad, with a stare of surprise.

"Where? when? why, this minute and in this place."

"And was it a whiskey keg, sir?"

"Sir, I am not here to be examined by you," replied Stinton. "Confound me if the conniving young rascal is not sticking me into a cross-examination already—I say, red-coat, where is the boy with the keg?"

"As for a boy, I did see a boy, sir; but the never a keg he had—hadn't he a gray frieze coat, sir?"

"He had."

"And wasn't it a dauny bit short about the skirts, plase your honor?"

"Again he's at me. Sirra, unless you tell me where he is in half-a-second, I shall lay my whip to your shoulders!"

"The sorra a keg I seen, then, sir,—the last keg I seen was——"

"Did you see a boy without the keg, answering to that description I gave you?"

"You gave no description of it, sir—but even if you did—when I didn't see it, how could I tell your honor anything about it?"

"Where is the fellow, you villain?" exlaimed the gauger in a fury—"where is he gone to? You admit you saw him; as for the keg, it cannot be far from us—but where is he?"

"Dad I saw a boy wid a short frieze coat upon him, crassing the road there below, and runnin' down the other side of that ditch."

This was too palpable a lie to stand the test even of a glance at the ditch in question; which was nothing more than a slight mound that ran down along a lea field, on which there was not even the appearance of a shrub.

The gauger looked at his companion—then turning to the boy—"Come, come, my lad," said he, "you know that lie is rather cool. Don't you feel in your soul that a rat could not have gone in that direction without our seeing it?"

"Bedad an' I saw him," returned the lad, "wid a gray coat upon him, that was a little too short in the tail—it's better than half-an-hour agone."

"The boy I speak of, you must have met," said Stinton. "It's not five minutes—no, not more than three, since he came inside the field."

"That my feet may grow to the ground then if I seen a boy, in or about this place, widin that time, barrin' myself."

The gauger eyed him closely for a short space, and pulling out half-a-crown, said—"Harkee, my lad, a word with you in private."

The fact is, that during the latter part of this dialogue, the worthy exciseman observed the cautious distance at which the boy kept himself from the grasp of him and his companion. A suspicion consequently began to dawn upon him, that in defiance of appearances, the lad himself might be the actual smuggler. On reconsidering the matter, this suspicion almost amounted to certainty; the time was too short to permit even the most ingenious cheat to render himself and his keg invisible in a manner so utterly unaccountable. On the other hand, when he reflected on the open, artless character of the boy's song; the capricious change to a light-hearted whistle, the surprise so naturally, and the respect so deferentially expressed, joined to the dissimilarity of dress, he was confounded again, and scarcely knew on which side to determine. Even the lad's reluctance to approach him might proceed from fear of the whip. He felt resolved, however, to

ascertain this point, and with the view of getting the lad into his hands, he showed him half-a-crown and addressed him as already stated.

The lad, on seeing the money, appeared to be instantly caught by it, and approached him, as if it had been a bait he could not resist; a circumstance which again staggered the gauger. In a moment, however, he seized him.

"Come, now," said he, unbuttoning his coat, "you will oblige me by stripping."

"And why so?" said the lad, with a face which might have furnished a painter or sculptor with a perfect notion of curiosity, perplexity, and wonder.

"Why so?" replied Stinton. "We shall see—we shall soon see."

"Surely you don't think I've hid the keg about me?" said the other, his features now relaxing into such an appearance of utter simplicity, as would have certainly made any other man than a gauger give up the examination as hopeless.

"No, no," replied the gauger; "by no means, you young rascal. See here, Cartwright," he continued, addressing his companion—"the keg, my precious;" again turning to the lad—"Oh! no, no, it would be cruel to suspect you of anything but the purest of simplicity."

"Look here, Cartwright"—having stripped the boy of his coat and turned it inside out, "there's a coat—there's thrift—there's economy for you. Come, sir, tuck on, tuck on instantly; here, I shall assist you—up with your arms—straighten your neck; it will be both straightened and stretched yet, my cherub. What think you now, Cartwright? Did you ever see a metamorphosis in your life so quick, complete, and unexpected?"

His companion was certainly astonished in no small degree, on seeing the red coat, when turned, become a comfortable gray frieze; one precisely such as he who bore the keg had on. Nay, after surveying his person and dress a second time, he instantly recognized him as the same.

"Now," continued the gauger addressing the boy again—"lose not a moment in letting us know where you've hid the keg."

"The sorra bit of it I hid—it fell aff o' me, an' I lost it; sure I'm lookin' after it myself, so I am;" and he moved over while speaking, as if pretending to search for it in a thin hedge, which could by no means conceal it.

"Cartwright," said the gauger, "did you ever see anything so perfect as this, so ripe a rascal. You don't understand him now. Here, you simpleton, harkee, sirra, there must be no playing the lapwing with me; back here to the same point. We may lay it down as a sure thing that whatever direction he takes from this spot is the wrong one; so back here, you, sir, till we survey the premises about us for your traces."

The boy walked sheepishly back, and appeared to look about him for the keg, with a kind of earnest stupidity which was altogether inimitable.

"I say, my boy," asked Stinton ironically, "don't you look rather foolish now? can you tell your right hand from your left?"

"I can," replied Condy, holding up his left, "there's my right hand."

"And what do you call the other?" said Cartwright.

"My left, bedad, anyhow, an' that's true enough." Both gentlemen laughed heartily.

"But it's carrying the thing a little *too far*," said the gauger: "in the meantime let us hear how you prove it?"

"Aisy enough, sir," replied Condy, "bekase I am left-handed. This," holding up the left, "is the right hand to me, whatever you may say to the conthrary."

Condy's countenance expanded, after he had spoken, into a grin so broad and full of grotesque sarcasm, that Stinton and his companion both found their faces, in spite of them, get rather blank under its influences.

"What the deuce!" exclaimed the gauger. "Are we to be here all day? Come, sir, bring us at once to the keg."

He was here interrupted by a laugh from Cartwright, so vociferous, long, and hearty, that he looked at him with amazement—"Hey, dey!" he exclaimed, "what's the matter, what's the matter—what new joke is this?"

In reply to this question, Cartwright simply pointed to a certain mark barely visible upon the hoar-frost, which mark extended down to the furze bushes that grew at the foot of the slope where they then stood.

As a stanch old hound lays his nose to the trail of a hare or fox, so did the gauger pursue the trace of the keg down the little hill; for the fact was, that Condy, having no other resource, trundled it off toward the furze, into which it settled perfectly to his satisfaction; and with all the quickness of youth and practice, instantly turned his coat, which had been made purposely for such rencounters. This accomplished, he had barely time to advance a few yards round the angle of the hedge, and changing his whole manner, as well as his appearance, acquitted himself as the reader has already seen. That he could have carried the keg down to the cover, then conceal it, and return to the spot where they met him, was utterly beyond the reach of human exertion, so that in point of fact they never could have suspected that the whiskey lay in such a place.

The triumph of the gauger was now complete, and a complacent sense of his own sagacity sat visibly on his features. Condy's face, on the other hand, became considerably lengthened, and appeared quite as rueful and mortified as the other's was joyous and confident.

"Who's sharpest now, my knowing one?" said he. "Who is the laugh against, as matters stand between us?"

"The sorra give you good of it," said Condy, sulkily.

"What is your name?" inquired Stinton.

"Barney Keerigan's my name," replied the other, indignantly; "and I'm not ashamed of it—nor afeared to tell it to you or any man."

"What, of the Keerigans of Killoghan?"

"Ay jist, of the Keerigans of Killoghan."

"I know the family," said Stinton; "they are decent *in their way*—but come, my lad, don't lose your temper, and answer me another question. Where were you bringing this whiskey?"

"To a betther man than ever stud in your shoes," replied Condy, in a tone of absolute defiance—"to a gintleman, any way," with a peculiar emphasis on the word gintleman.

"But what's his name?"

"Mr. Stinton's his name—Gauger Stinton."

The shrewd exciseman stood and fixed his keen eye on Condy with a glance of such piercing scrutiny as scarcely any consciousness of imposture could withstand.

Condy, on the other hand, stood and eyed him with an open, unshrinking, yet angry glance; never winced, but appeared, by the detection of his keg, to have altogether forgotten the line of cunning policy he had previously adopted, in a mortification which had predominated over duplicity and art.

"He is now speaking truth," thought the gauger. "He has lost his temper, and is completely off his guard."

"Well, my lad," he continued, "that is very good so far, but who sent the keg to Stinton?"

"Do you think," said Condy, with a look of strong contempt at the gauger, for deeming him so utterly silly as to tell him, "do you think that you can make me turn informer? There's none of *that* blood in me, thank goodness."

"Do you know Stinton?"

"How could I know the man I never seen?" replied Condy, still out of temper. "But one thing I don't know, gintlemen, and that is, whether you have any right to take my whiskey or not?"

"As to that, my good lad, make your mind easy—I'm Stinton."

"You, sir!" said Condy, with well-feigned surprise.

"Yes," replied the other, "I'm the very man you were bringing the keg to. And now I'll tell you what you must do for me; proceed to my house with as little

delay as possible; ask to see my daughter—ask for Miss Stinton—take this key and desire her to have the keg put into the cellar; she'll know the key, and let it also be as a token that she is to give you your breakfast. Say I desired that keg to be placed to the right of the five-gallon one I seized on Thursday last, that stands on a little stillion under my blunderbuss."

"Of course," said Condy, who appeared to have misgivings on the matter, "I suppose I must, but somehow——"

"Why, sirrah, what do you grumble now for?"

Condy still eyed him with suspicion—"And, sir," said he, after having once more mounted the keg, "am I to get nothing for sich a weary trudge as I had wid it, but my breakfast?"

"Here," said Stinton, throwing him half-a-crown, "take that along with it, and now be off—or stop,—Cartwright, will you dine with me to-day, and let us broach the keg? I'll guarantee its excellence, for this is not the first I have got from the same quarter—that's *entre nous.*"

"With all my heart," replied Cartwright, "upon the terms you say, that of the broach."

"Then, my lad," said Stinton, "say to my daughter, that a friend, perhaps a friend or two, will dine with me to-day—that is enough."

They then mounted their horses and were proceeding as before, when Cartwright addressed the gauger as follows:

"Do you not put this lad, Stinton, in a capacity to overreach you yet?"

"No," replied the other, "the young rascal spoke the truth after the discovery of the keg, for he lost his temper, and was no longer cool."

"For my part, hang me if I'd trust him."

"I should scruple to do so myself," replied the gauger, "but, as I said, these Kerrigans—notorious illicit fellows, by the way—send me a keg or two every year, and almost always about this very time. Besides, I read him to the heart and he never winced. Yes,

decidedly, the whiskey was for me; of that I have no doubt whatsoever."

"I most positively would not trust him."

"Not that perhaps I ought," said Stinton, "on second thought, to place such confidence in a lad who acted so adroitly in the beginning. Let us call him back, and re-examine him, at all events."

Now Condy had, during this conversation, been discussing the very same point with himself.

"Bad cess forever attend you, Stinton, agra!" he exclaimed. "Bedad, it's well I thought o' the Kerrigans; for sure enough I did hear Barney say that he was to send a keg in to him this week, some day—and he didn't think I knew him aither. Faix, it's many a long day since I knew the sharp *puss* of him, wid an eye like a hawk. But what if they folly me, and do up all? Anyway, I'll prevint them from having suspicion on me, before I go a toe farther, the ugly rips."

He instantly wheeled about, a moment or two before Stinton and Cartwright had done the same, for the purpose of sifting him still more thoroughly—so that they found him meeting them.

"Gintlemen," said he, "how do I know that aither of yous is Mr. Stinton, or that the house you directed me to is his? I know that if the whiskey doesn't go to him, I may lave the counthry!"

"You are either a deeper rogue or a more stupid fool than I took you to be," observed Stinton—"but what security can you give us that you will leave the keg safely at its destination?"

"If I thought you were Mr. Stinton, I'd be very glad to lave you the whiskey where it is, and even do widout my breakfast. Gintlemen, tell me thruth, bekase I'd only be murdhered out of the face."

"Why, you idiot!" said the gauger, losing his temper and suspicions both together, "can't you go to the town and inquire where Mr. Stinton lives?"

"Bedad thin, thrue enough, I never thought of that at all; but I beg your pardon, gintlemen, an' I hope you won't be angry wid me, in regard that it's kilt and

quartered I'd be if I let myself be made a fool of by anybody."

"Do what I desire you," said the exciseman; "inquire for Mr. Stinton's house, and you may be sure the whiskey will reach him."

"Thank you, sir. Bedad, I might have thought of that myself."

This last clause, which was spoken in a soliloquy, would have deceived a saint himself.

"Now," said Stinton after they had recommenced their journey, "are you satisfied?"

"I am at length," said Cartwright. "If his intentions had been dishonest, instead of returning to make himself certain against being deceived, he would have made the best of his way from us—a rogue never wantonly puts himself in the way of danger or detection."

That evening, about five o'clock, Stinton, Cartwright, and two others arrived at the house of the worthy gauger to partake of his good cheer. A cold, frosty evening gave a peculiar zest to the comfort of a warm room, a blazing fire, and a good dinner. No sooner were the viands discussed, the cloth removed, and the glasses ready, than their generous host desired his daughter to assist the servant in broaching the redoubtable keg.

"That keg, my dear," he proceeded, "which the country lad, who brought the key of the cellar, left here to-day."

"A keg!" repeated the daughter, with surprise.

"Yes, Maggy, my love, a keg; I said so, I think."

"But, papa, there came no keg here to-day!"

The gauger and Cartwright both groaned in unison.

"No keg!" said the gauger.

"No keg!" echoed Cartwright.

"No keg, indeed," re-echoed Miss Stinton—"but there came a country boy with the key of the cellar, as a token that he was to get the five-gallon——"

"Oh!" groaned the gauger, "I'm knocked up, outwitted,—oh!"

"Bought and sold," added Cartwright.

"Go on," said the gauger, "I must hear it out!"

"As a token," proceeded Miss Stinton, "that he was to get the five-gallon keg on the little stillion, under the blunderbuss, for Captain Dalton."

"And he got it?"

"Yes, sir, he got it; for I took the key as a sufficient token."

"But Maggy—fury and witches hear me, child—surely he brought a keg here and left it; and of course it's in the cellar?"

"No, indeed, papa, he brought no keg here; but he did carry the five-gallon one that *was* in the cellar away with him."

"Stinton," said Cartwright, "send round the bottle."

"The rascal," ejaculated the gauger, "we shall drink his health."

And on relating the circumstances, the company drank to the sheepish lad's health, that bought and sold the gauger.

One's blood runs cold while reading this powerful sketch. Even an insane man, one can readily understand, could not fail to learn a lesson from so awful an experience. It is adapted from *Le Figaro* for ROMANCE by Elizabeth Wormeley Latimer.

A MANIAC'S WHIM.

CHARLES CARTER WILLOUGHBY was the son of a rich Baronet in Yorkshire. He was not a man of great ability, but he was remarkable for his extreme tenacity of purpose. He called it his indomitable perseverance. His friends and family called it wilful obstinacy. He had set his heart on taking high honors at Oxford, but when he had secured his "Double First," his health gave way. When he recovered from a serious illness, his family could not be persuaded that he needed rest and quiet; they said that what he wanted was change. So they sent him with plenty of money in his pocket to amuse himself in European capitals. But the mental evil was far greater than they suspected. Over-work had made him a monomaniac, and the form his monomania took was a passion for natural history.

One night in Paris when he had been strolling alone under the flaunting gas-light along the Boulevards, watching the men and women who crowded the broad pavement, sat on chairs before the cafés, or poured out of the theatres, his eye was attracted by a placard which announced to the public in large letters that within might be seen the Javanese Menagerie, among whose wonders were six noble lions. The largest lion, it said, would play at blind-man's-buff with Signor Mascheretti, "the same," added the advertisement, "who had had the honor to be severely wounded by a Royal Bengal tiger in the presence of Her Britannic Majesty."

"Poor animals! Poor imprisoned beasts!" exclaimed the Englishman, talking to himself, for he had no one else to talk to. "Poor unhappy animals!—dragging

out existence behind iron bars. What would I not give to restore you to freedom! You are victims of the race of man—a race to which happily I feel myself to belong no longer. I am conscious of a process of evolution into a higher state. How can any creature who partakes of the divine intelligence imagine that the flaunting, pleasure-seeking, vicious, loitering crowd of human beings that I see upon the boulevards are your superiors? I am sick of the pretensions of mankind!"

The next morning he drove to the Menagerie Mascheretti on the Boulevard Saint Martin.

The Menagerie occupied a former carriage factory. The public entrance was from the Boulevard, but a private entrance through a long, dark passage led also to the interior. This passage had an iron door at each end; the kind the French call *grilles*. One of these opened on a tiny court-yard leading to a back street; the other opened into the great hall where were the cages of the wild beasts and also a little chamber occupied by Signor Mascheretti, who, being exceedingly attached to his animals, was unwilling to trust them by night to the care, or carelessness, of his subordinates.

By day he was usually to be found at a café on the Boulevard opposite to the Menagerie, and there the Yorkshire gentleman was directed to seek him.

After introducing himself briefly to the "artist," the Englishman said abruptly: "I want to buy your Menagerie."

"My Menagerie is not for sale," was the answer.

"Oh! but," replied Willoughby, "money can buy anything. I have come here to purchase your Menagerie."

And, in the end, though Mascheretti was most unwilling to part with his animals, the Englishman became the purchaser.

It was stipulated that Mascheretti was to give one more performance, during which he would take leave of the public. On the day after that he was to pay off all his helpers and performers and take a tender farewell of his animals.

"I will leave you my second in command," he said to the Englishman. "He understands all about the beasts as well as I do."

"I don't want him," replied Willoughby. "Pack him off with the rest. I have people enough to do all I shall require."

Then Mascheretti took the new purchaser to see his beasts. When they reached the iron gate of the private passage, he took several keys from his pocket. "To-morrow I will give you these keys," he said. "Now let me show you my animals—yours, I mean," and he gave a deep sigh.

As they entered the passage, Willoughby perceived an immense dog-kennel just inside the iron gate that opened into the Menagerie. It contained an enormous mastiff, who, though fastened by a chain, sprang furiously forward with bristling back and flashing eyes. His master quieted him by a glance, but not before he had excited the admiration of the Englishman, who instantly asked if he had purchased him, too.

"Yes," answered the Signor, "but on condition that you will pay 500 francs to my employes to make up to them for losing their places without warning."

"All right," said the Englishman. "Good dog!" he added, addressing the mastiff. "What a noble animal!"

They entered the hall, at one end of which were the cages of the wild beasts. At Mascheretti's appearance there arose a chorus of roars, howls, jabberings, and other noises.

"Here is my famous Bengal tiger," said the showman. "He came near ruining my shoulder for life, but he made my fortune. We were performing to miserably small audiences in London, but the day after the accident, and our menagerie became the rage. Here is Queen Mab, my pet panther. I would not like to let every one know it, but she has eaten her man. The jaguars have done worse. They attacked and seriously injured one of my elephants. Toby, there, is a splendid lion. He tore three Arabs in pieces when he was very young. That white bear, Nimrod, is a

splendid fellow. He was captured with great difficulty in the Polar Seas after he had disposed of a canoe and some Esquimaux. His mate is less distinguished. She eats only her cubs. And there, too, you see all the rest, hyenas, tiger-cats, birds, leopards, monkeys. . . . It makes me sad to think that I have sold them. Yes! my poor fellows," he went on with a Southern effusion that rather astonished the Englishman, "your master has sold you! He has exchanged you for a handful of English gold! But one thing I promise you. I will never fill your places. I will own no other wild beasts. I will set up no other menagerie. My career as an artist is ended. To-night will be my last performance. After that we will share no more triumphs; never again shall we enjoy the pleasure of terrifying an audience. To-morrow you will be nothing but caged beasts, and I shall be a man out of employment, like any ordinary mortal."

"Yes! To-morrow," thought the Englishman, "about midnight I will have you snoring in some restaurant or *café*, with liquor in your head, and bank notes in your pocket, while I creep softly into this great hall and let out all your former pets upon the crowded Boulevard."

As he spoke, there passed through his disordered brain a vision of what would happen when he did so. He saw the first uncertain steps of the freed animals; then their wild bounds, their rising fury, their excitement, their ferocity. He saw the terror of the crowd upon the Boulevard; their panic; their fright; the selfish *sauve qui peut* of the many, the heroic self-sacrifice of the few. He saw Paris become suddenly a wild beasts' hunting-ground. He heard shrieks, volleys of musketry, the ringing of alarm bells, the roar of the infuriated beasts, the general consternation. He thrilled with pleasure at the thought that all this would be his doing.

The next morning he paid Mascheretti, who was half-tipsy by mid-day. Two hours later, he was more tipsy, though he did not seem so. He was accustomed to command himself. His business required self-pos-

session. But the liquor he had imbibed made him break forth in a maudlin lament for his lost menagerie.

"How sad it will be," he said, "to have nothing to do but to amuse myself!" And he walked down at four o'clock to the quarters of the Javanese Menagerie to see if the Englishman was having his pets properly fed. He found that every animal had had as much as it could eat; all were stuffed to repletion, all had a bewildered, sleepy look, except the mastiff. He had declined to eat what had been set before him. He was grieving for his master.

"They will sleep soundly till midnight," thought the Englishman. "They will not wake until I shall have warily and noiselessly opened their cage-doors, and shall have taken my place on a balcony I have hired in a house opposite. I shall see them when they wake and walk forth at liberty. Oh, what fun!"

He had mixed a strong anodyne in the food that he had given them, and felt sure that they would sleep for several hours.

"And now," he thought, "I must make sure of the Signor." He therefore invited him to dine with him, meaning to leave him dead-drunk under the table.

Sure enough, late in the evening, after a luxurious dinner at a fashionable restaurant, where claret and champagne had flowed freely, Signor Mascheretti sat in his chair fast asleep. The Englishman called a waiter, and, giving him a handsome fee, desired him not on any account to wake the gentleman. After that, he went away. The moment for his enterprise had come. His heart beat with impatience and satisfaction.

II.

It was eleven o'clock. The Boulevards were brilliant with gas-light. From the Madeline to the Porte Saint Martin all was splendor and gaiety. Horses champed at their bits and shook their harness. Carriages rolled over the stones. People came pouring out of theatres and dancing halls. It was a lovely night. All Paris

was abroad, and what part of it was so brilliant and so crowded as the Boulevards?

The Englishman crept furtively through the crowds. No one noticed him. At last he reached the back entrance to the menagerie, where only one gas-light shone in the darkness. The back entrance opened on a little court-yard. He went into this place and stood before the iron *grille*. He put the key in the lock. He turned it carefully. The door opened. He passed through, and closed it after him, putting the key in his pocket. This was a precaution lest he should be surprised by Mascheretti.

He went on toward the inner door. He saw the fierce eyes of the mastiff gleaming at him through the bars and heard the rattle of his chain. He unlocked the second door, and entered the menagerie. The animals seemed to be waking up. When they heard him approach, they began to make various noises. He had a candle in his pocket. He lighted it and looked into their cages. None of them were fully roused, but all seemed to be on the point of waking. There was no time to be lost. Very softly he opened the door of the tiger's cage, then that of the lions, one after the other, until at last all were emancipated.

"All right, so far," said the Englishman. "Now in half-an-hour I shall see all Paris in an uproar. What fun! What fun!"

Having opened all the cages, he left the iron door open that led from the menagerie to the long passage, and proceeded down that passage to the outside entrance, the door which he had locked so carefully.

"The jaguars will come out first," he thought. "They seem more fully awake than the others; then the two white bears; then the lions; all will be ready for a midnight banquet. By that time, the alarm will have been given. There will be racing and chasing in all directions. Men will shout and women will scream. I defy any man on earth to go in that hall and shut the cages after the beasts begin to swarm down this passage."

And he kept on saying at intervals to himself: "Oh, what fun!"

"When I set the outer gate open," he reflected, "I will fasten it back so that there will be no chance of its shutting to. There is too much gas-light," he added. "It may dazzle their eyes as they come out, and it may drive them back again."

So saying, he tried to turn off the gas with his cane. But the cane was too slender. He remembered to have seen an iron rod standing behind the door. With this he put out the gas.

"And now," said he, "for the outside door. When that is open, my part will be played, and then will begin the fun!"

At that moment he was nearly knocked down by a swift blow upon his back. The mastiff was upon him. He had broken his chain! The Englishman had only time to spring aside, and to strike frantically about him with his bar of iron. He darted forward to open the iron gate, now within three feet of him. The jaws of the mastiff had not wounded him. In the darkness the dog had only secured a mouthful of his clothing.

But horror! Part of that mouthful was his pocket. In that pocket was the key of the outside gate, and his pocket-pistol!

With the rapidity of lightning the Englishman saw the hopelessness of his situation. On one side was the gate, which he could not open; on the other, was the mastiff, a wild beast in himself, and his only weapon in the dark was his bar of iron! It seemed to keep the dog in check, but what would it do against all the wild beasts in the menagerie?

Willoughby was strong and active, but do what he would, he could not burst the bars of the iron door, nor break the lock. He dared not try to climb over the high gate. Such an attempt would force him to lay down his iron bar, and to expose himself in the rear to the attack of his enemy. He dared not cry aloud for help. A cry might bring upon him all the wild animals.

A cold sweat broke out all over him. "And this dreadful dog is mine!" he thought. "I paid 500 francs for him. I am his master. I don't even know his name. Hi! Hector, Lion, Cæsar, Bull, Fox, Sport, Tray, Dash!—What is the use? He has some French or some Italian name that of course I never heard of. To think of his having broken his chain! So much for French hardware! And there's the Signor comfortably asleep with his head on the table in the restaurant, while I——"

Here he was interrupted by low growls from the menagerie. Momentarily they increased in violence. The dog seemed to turn his attention that way. The Englishman profited by this to make a last and supreme effort. He flung himself against the iron door with all his might, he tried to force the lock with his iron bar—when suddenly the door was flung wide open. He fell through it on his face, and fainted away.

It was the Signor Mascheretti who opened the door. He had retained a pass-key, and had come down to the menagerie at midnight to look upon his beloved animals once more.

"I should like to know," said he to the Englishman when he stood by him in the little court-yard, as he came to his senses, "what all this is about? I find my dog with a broken chain, and all the cages open. While you came to yourself I have been in and fastened them. My good sir, the police will be apt to look into this matter. You little understand how to care for your menagerie."

"Mine?" cried the Englishman. "It is yours! I give it all back to you. Keep it—the dog and all! But never say a word of this, for your life!—Never a word!"

Signor Mascheretti kept the secret; and how I came to hear about it you will never know.

We are continually reminded that human nature is the same all over the world. Emerson, though he made no pretense to being a statistician, even goes so far as to say that there are just as many good men in one nation as in another. Possibly he may mean that there are just as many men with naturally good traits in one nation as in another—but it is doubtful whether this can be mathematically demonstrated. Guy de Maupassant is at some trouble in the following pathetic story to show us that the weakness for stimulants and the greed for gold are well developed in France. The tale has been translated for ROMANCE by C. S. Hartmann.

THE FIRKIN.

CHICOT, the innkeeper of Egreville, halted with his team before the house of old Mother Magloire. He carried forty years on his shoulders, and was red, round and fat—a genuine rogue.

He fastened his nag at the garden post and entered. Long ago Chicot had cast his eyes upon the woman's little farm, which bordered directly on his large estate. Twenty times at least he had tried to get possession of it, but the old woman resisted him obstinately.

"Here I was born, and here I will die!" she was in the habit of saying.

He found her before the door, peeling potatoes. Seventy years had made her withered, haggard and humpbacked, yet she was as active as a young girl. Chicot tapped her in a friendly manner on the back, and sat down at her side on a footstool.

"Well, mother, how are things getting on? Always prospering?"

"Just so—just so—and with you, Monsieur Prosper?"

"Well, well, one has one's troubles! Still, things go fairly well!"

"The better for you!" She said nothing further.

Chicot looked at her work. Her crooked rheumatic fingers, as hard as lobster-claws, picked the potatoes out of the basket. Quickly she turned them and re-

moved the parings in long strips, with an old kitchen knife, which she held in the other hand. If a potato had turned a nice yellow, it was thrown into a vessel full of water. Three hardy-looking chickens came, one after another, to her apron, picked up the parings and hastily withdrew, with the prey in their beaks.

Chicot seemed confused, timid, anxious. He wished to say something, and did not know how.

At last he took courage:

"Tell me, Mother Magloire?"

"What can I do for you?"

"Don't you wish to sell your farm?"

"God help me! I don't think of it any longer. I have said so. I have said so, and that settles it!"

"Well, I have found an expedient, which will help us both."

"What is it?"

"Listen. You will sell me the farm and keep it, after all. Do you understand? Listen to my proposal."

The old woman stopped her work, and fastened her eyes, which still looked very lively under their wrinkled eyelids, on the innkeeper. He continued:

"I will be more explicit. I will give you 150 francs a month. Now listen. Every month I will bring thirty five-franc pieces in my carriage, and yet everything shall remain in the old way—absolutely in the old way. You live in your little house, you owe me nothing whatever, you only take my money. Do you understand?"

He gazed into her face with a merry expression.

Old Magloire looked doubtful, as if she suspected a snare. Then she asked.

"As far as this I have considered. But where do you come in? For, with all that, you haven't yet got my farm?"

He answered: "Don't bother about that. You remain here as long as God grants you life. You are on your property. Only you sign a paper at the notary's that I am to be your heir, as you have no children, except a son-in-law for whom you do not care. Are

you satisfied? You keep your farm while you live, and I pay you for it. It is a fine bargain for you!"

Old Magloire seemed surprised, disquieted, but, after all, not opposed to the scheme. She answered: "I don't say no. I will think it over. Come again next week, and you shall have your answer."

And Chicot drove away, as satisfied as a king who has conquered a large domain.

Mother Magloire remained meditating. She did not sleep the following night. For four days she continued irresolute and restless. She had a presentiment that something was wrong in the matter, and yet the thought of thirty five-franc pieces every month, the thought of the beautiful, jingling money, which would roll into her apron as if fallen from heaven, devoured her.

At last she went to the notary, and related the matter to him. He advised her to accept Chicot's offer, but to ask fifty, instead of thirty, five-franc pieces, as her property was worth 50,000 francs, at least.

"If you should live fifteen years," said the notary, "he would pay you, in this way, only 45,000 francs."

Old Magloire trembled in the hope of receiving fifty five-franc pieces every month but she did not quite trust Chicot. She was afraid of tricks and hidden snares. So she remained until the evening, asked innumerable questions and could not come to a decision. At last she bade the notary to draw up the contract. Then she returned home as if intoxicated.

When Chicot called again for an answer, he had to entreat her for a long time. She explained that she did not care to do the thing. Nevertheless, all the time she entertained a secret fear that he would not give her the fifty five-franc pieces. At last, as he did not cease importuning her, she burst out with her new demand.

His face took on a puzzled expression and he declined. To regain his favor, she mentioned the probable number of years she still had to live.

"I have only five or six years more before me. I am already in my seventy-third year and not so very strong.

Lately I have thought that it would soon be over with me." Yet Chicot was not so easily caught.

"Don't mention it, old woman, you canny old fox. You are as solid as our church steeple. You will live to be at least a hundred years old, and will bury me, believe me!"

They spent the whole day in haggling, but as old Magloire was not willing to give in, the innkeeper at last consented to pay the fifty five-franc pieces monthly.

They signed the contract next morning. And Mother Magloire asked for ten five-franc pieces as first deposit.

Three years passed. Mother Magloire did not seem a day older than when she made her contract with Chicot, and he was in despair. It seemed to him as if he had paid the revenue for half-a-century already,—as if he was deceived, ruined. From time to time he made a visit to the farm, as one walks over the fields in July and looks to see whether the corn is ripe for the sickle. She received him with malicious glances, as if she congratulated herself on the clever trick she had played him, and he quickly entered his carriage again, murmuring: "Will you never die, old skeleton!"

He was helpless. He felt, whenever he caught sight of her, as though he would like to smother her. He hated her with a wild, malicious anger.

He searched for a remedy. One day he came, and rubbed his hands pleasantly, as he did on the day when he had made her the proposition which she accepted. After talking a few minutes about indifferent matters, he said: "By the by, mother, why do you never stop in and dine with me, when you come to Egreville. People talk about it. They say our friendship has come to an end. And that makes me feel uncomfortable. Dining with me, you save money,—and I will only be too glad to call you my guest. Come as often as you like, without further ceremony. It will be a pleasure to me."

Mother Magloire did not need much persuasion. Two days after the visit, driving with her farmhand in

her little cart to market, she had her horse put into friend Chicot's comfortable stable, and asked for the promised dinner.

The host, beaming with joy, treated her like a lady, and served her with chicken, sausages, mutton and cabbage. Yet she did not eat much. Temperate since childhood, she had lived most of her life on soup and bread and butter. Chicot urged her in a somewhat embarrassed manner. Nor did she drink anything—she refused the coffee.

"But a little cordial you won't refuse?" he asked.

"That I'll take—that I can't refuse." And he called through the barroom as loud as he could:

"Rosalie, bring the best, the very best!" The servant-girl appeared with a large bottle, ornamented with a paper vineleaf. He filled two glasses. "Take it, mother, it's fine!"

The good old woman sipped it slowly, to lengthen the enjoyment. On emptying her glass, she licked up the last drops and remarked: "Yes, yes, I must say that's very good."

At the same moment Chicot refilled her glass. She wished to decline, but it was too late. Slowly she sipped it, as she had sipped the first.

When he was going to fill it for her the third time, she refused. But he insisted. "It's as harmless as milk," he said. "I drink ten, twenty, of such glasses without any difficulty. It goes down like sugar, and does not hurt either body or soul. One feels how it melts on the tongue. Nothing is better for your health!"

Feeling a strong inclination for it, she consented, but only drank half the glass, and Chicot, in a moment of extreme generosity, exclaimed: "Say, if you really like it so well, I will give you a firkin of this stuff, to show you that I am still a good friend of yours."

She did not refuse the offer, and went home a little elated.

The next morning the innkeeper called at Mother Magloire's, and drew a firkin, bound with iron hoops,

out of the carriage. He asked her to taste its contents, and it was the same—the *very best.*"

After they had each finished three glasses, Chicot took leave.

"By the by, when you are through with this firkin, ask for another. Don't be bashful. I am not stingy! The sooner it is drunk, the better." Then he drove away.

In four days he called again. The old woman sat before the door, cutting bread into the soup. He came up to her and shook hands, bringing his face in close proximity to hers, in order to smell her breath. Yes, there was a faint odor of alcohol, and his face beamed with pleasure.

"Well, how would a drink suit you?" Then they clinked their glasses together, twice, three times.

Soon it was rumored in the village that Mother Magloire was tippling—on the sly.

Later on she was found lying prostrate, sometimes in the kitchen, sometimes in the yard, at other times in the streets. She was carried home as stiff and rigid as a corpse.

Chicot did not come to see her any more. And when people told him about the old peasant woman, he murmured, making a sad face: "'Tis bad at her age to fall into such a habit. When one is as old as she, there's no remedy for it. I tell you it will play her a bad trick yet!"

And it did play her a bad trick. She died during the following winter, near Christmas. She was found lying drunk in the snow.

Monsieur Chicot took possession of her property. He used to remark: "Poor old Mother Magloire! If she had not become a drunkard, she could have lived ten years more at least!"

The old man who tried to pass off the little "watches" was sentimental; and such persons do not mind, in order to please a child, filing fifty-cent pieces or punching holes in quarter-dollars, as a more worldly-minded individual might. But sometimes the sentimentalist comes out as well in the end as his more thrifty brother, as will be seen by this touching sketch from the Little Rock *Gazette*.

THE LITTLE WATCHES.

A FEW years after the war, an old man entered a Little Rock store, and taking from his pocket an old buckskin pouch, he emptied two coins on the counter, and then, after regarding the silver for a few moments, said:

"Mister, I want to buy some goods to make a dress."

"That money is mutilated, old gentleman. This twenty-five-cent piece has notches filed in it, and this fifty-cent piece has been punched. You see, they have been abused. I can't take them."

"Abused?" said the old man. "Abused?" and he took up the fifty-cent piece and looked at it tenderly. And you won't take it on account of the holes! Heaven grant that I did not have to offer it to you! Years ago, when my first child was a little girl, I punched a hole in this coin, and strung it around her neck. It was her constant plaything. At night when she went to bed we'd take it off, but early in the morning she would call for her watch. When our John—you didn't know John, did you? No. Well, he used to come to town a good deal."

"Where is he now?" asked the merchant, not knowing what to say, but desiring to show appreciation of the old man's story.

"He was killed in the war. I say that when John was a little boy, I strung this quarter around his neck. One day his watch got out of fix, he said, and he filed these notches in it. He and his sister Mary—that was the girl's name—used to play in the yard and compare

their watches to see if they were right. Sometimes John wouldn't like it, because Mary's watch was bigger than his, but she would explain that she was bigger than he was and ought to have a bigger watch. The children grew up, but as they had always lived in the woods, they were not ashamed to wear their watches. When a young man came to see Mary once, she forgetfully looked at her fifty-cent-piece. 'What are you doing?' asked the young man, and when she told him she was looking at her watch, he took it as a hint and went home. After this she did not wear her watch in company.

"Well, Mary and the young man married. John went off in the army and got killed. Mary's husband died, and about two years ago Mary was taken sick. When her mother and I reached the house she was dying. Calling me to her bed, she said: 'Papa, lean over.' I leaned over, and, taking something from under her pillow, she put it around my neck and said: 'Papa, take care of my watch.'"

The old man looked at the merchant. The eyes of both men were moist.

"Do you see that boy out there on the wagon?" said the old man. "Well, that is Mary's child. I wouldn't part with this money, but my old wife died this morning, and I have come to buy her a shroud."

When the old man went out, he carried a bundle in one hand and the "watches" in the other.

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Monsieur Victorien Sardou in this story of "A Loaded Bomb-Shell" has seized the old idea of a braggart's punishment by a test of bravery, but has given it so startling and original a setting that a new light will be turned upon this familiar character. It was translated for the New York *Home Journal*. The incident itself is, like all of Sardou's conceptions, admirably adapted to the stage.

A LOADED BOMB-SHELL.

THE return of New Year's Day recalls always to my memory an episode of the siege of Paris, which gained me some credit. I am proud of it.

Let the reader be reassured. I shall not conduct him to the ramparts, nor to the outposts, but only to the Rue Trevise and the house of my old friend Dutailly, a rich manufacturer of chemicals, the husband of an excellent wife, the father of a charming daughter, a skilful manufacturer, a good patriot, a little foolish respecting politics, but after all the best fellow in the world.

Surprised by the investment of Paris when he had packed his trunks to leave, he was consoled by the conviction that the city would not hold out a week. Better advised, Madame Dutailly began at first by provisioning the house, in which she amassed such an abundance of food that had the siege lasted three months longer the Dutaillys would never have starved. Then she finished her work by putting in her small garden a cow, a poultry house, even a pigsty, that three months later was worth its weight in gold.

In the month of October we blessed her. I first, for whom a plate was placed on the Dutailly table, Tuesday and Sunday evenings, and who found there a recompense for the privations of the rest of the week. Why should not one be delighted in these days of scarcity at the sight of a lard omelette, or a morsel of cheese moistened by excellent wines which had no par-

entage, a rare thing considering the chemicals of the house?

I was not the only guest received at this hospitable mansion. Another person had his plate by the side of mine, young Anatole Brichant, principal clerk of the manufactory, the future partner and son-in-law of Dutailly. This quiet, serious and somewhat diffident young man was very much in love with the daughter of his patron, and Mlle. Gertrude was not insensible to his affection. Without having exchanged a word, the attentions of Brichant were received with favor by the Dutaillys, and the union of the two young people was tacitly agreed upon; but unfortunately the war postponed the event. Brichant, a corporal in the corps, moved to the Seine and barracks of St. Denis, did his duty as a soldier conscientiously, as he did everything else, but without enthusiasm: it must be confessed, he execrated this siege, which postponed his happiness, and mildly criticised the operations with a little bitter feeling. These criticisms did not fail to irritate Dutailly, who was a follower of Gen. Trochu. There was something else; the Temps just at that time published a series of articles whose author reconstructed the military operations of the province according to his own fancy. Dutailly had taken these fancies as matters of fact. He placed his little flags on the chart, at the points decided upon by the strategist of the Temps, followed with anxiety the fictitious marches and counter-marches, and predicted after a brief delay decided victories for us. Brichant, incredulous, offered a timid objection. Dutailly was excited and angry. I interrupted to stop the discussion, but the host at the bottom of his heart was not consoled for all the battles his clerk prevented him from gaining.

The presence of a new guest complicated the matter still more. I was surprised one evening arriving late to find my place at the right of Mme. Dutailly occupied by a red-faced, broad-shouldered and boastful stranger. He wore the epaulettes of a captain on his fantastic uniform—the cast-off clothing of some theatre, and

was shod with enormous boots, in which it was impossible for me to recognize a hero.

"Monsieur Robillard," said Monsieur Dutailly, introducing us, "captain of the Enfants Perdus de Courbevoie."

Before I had finished the soup I had made up my mind respecting Robillard. The exploits of the soldier of fortune consisted of stripping the houses in the suburbs of the furniture that might tempt the greed of the enemy, and putting it in a safe place. I asked how it happened that this heavy-featured man had come this evening to partake of our cheese. Mme. Dutailly told me with some feeling she had had a fall on the Boulevard Poissonniere, slippery with frost. Robillard, who was passing, had carried her, slightly bruised and partially insensible, to the nearest chemist and returned home with her. Out of gratitude she could do no less than invite her preserver to dinner. This explanation satisfied me. I hoped to be rid of the hero from that time.

The rogue was no fool. He said he was interested in a large coal-mining business that obliged him to journey over Europe, and entertained us very pleasantly with reminiscences of his travels. The war brought him to Paris, whose danger claimed his presence. As to his exploits in the suburbs at the head of the Enfants Perdus, they passed all credence. Madame Dutailly listened to these falsehoods with pleasure. Dutailly was desirous to believe, too. Gertrude alone was incredulous. As to poor little Anatole, paler and more lost than ever in his large blouse, and afflicted besides with a cold in the head, which makes one ridiculous, he seemed crushed by the neighborhood of the great braggart, who did not fail to treat him to painful allusions, scornful glances and unpleasant comparisons.

I made an excuse to leave after the coffee, disgusted with the boasting of this gascon, to whom I thought to bid adieu forever. In that I was deceived. On the following morning, Sunday, I found him in the same place; then on Tuesday. Finally he had his plate placed at all our repasts.

The Dutailly household was fascinated. Robillard had interested Mme. Dutailly by his good humor and a graceful gallantry to which no woman of her age is insensible, and Papa Dutailly by the interest he seemed to take in the military operations of the Temps and in arranging the little flags on the chart. Anatole, still suffering from his cold, lost at every meal by this braggart all the ground he had gained.

His disrepute was more obvious after the affair of Bourget, where the courageous boy had bravely done his duty, and whence he had returned wounded in the forearm. He told us about the fight, the death of Baroche, killed by his side, the surrender and retreat, the sad end of a brave combat, with so pitiable a despondency that the captain treated him for a while as a deserter and coward. If he did not continue to do so, it was only out of regard for his entertainers, but he made him understand it. With what a noble indignation he demonstrated that, if the Enfants Perdus had been there, the fight would have had another result. Thereupon, excited, he sketched a plan of sortie by the heights of Montmorency, Cormeilles, with the passage of the Oise, marching on Rouen, and then arriving triumphantly at Havre, which moved Dutailly to enthusiasm; while poor Anatole, humiliated, and suffering greatly from his still open wound, received no attention from any one but Gertrude and myself.

On the next day he had a fever and kept his bed, and for some weeks was absent from our meals. The captain quickly established his pretensions to the hand of Gertrude and her parents did not discourage him. The day on which Anatole returned to us convalescent, but thinner than ever, it seemed to me that Mlle. Gertrude's eyes were red, and she had on that day quarrelled with her mother, who was more infatuated than ever with Robillard. I thought it time to interfere in behalf of the poor children. This day was the last Sunday of the year and consequently we spoke of the new year, saying that we ought to have a family festival.

"Certainly, Mme. Dutailly," cried the captain. "I must prepare a surprise for your gift."

That gave me an idea for mine.

On New Year's day Dutailly welcomed us very cordially. The strategist of the Temps was to soundly beat Prince Charles in the environs of Coreux, after having drawn him there by a simulated retreat, which was the finest deed of arms of modern times. Dutailly told us this good news for our gift. Anatole presented a rabbit he had caught in a net, in the devastated isle of St. Denis, a pet rabbit which had returned to its wild state. As for the captain, he gave Madame Dutailly a large bag of marrons glaces in a German helmet.

"Dear Madame," he said smiling, "I would have liked to offer you the head of the owner of this helmet."

"What!" cried Madame Dutailly, filled with admiration, "have you killed him?"

"To offer you this box of bonbons. May I say it is not in the power of every one? I will relate the adventure, as you think so well of the actor."

He had watched, surprised and frightened the wearer of the helmet, a deserting sentinel, while hiding in a cask, and in a hand-to-hand fight had strangled him in order not to attract the notice of the enemy by firing his revolver. Oh, what a miserable appearance this rabbit caught in a net, also strangled, made by the side of this glorious trophy!

"As for me," said I, "I cannot rival the captain with so brave a gift, yet I have also my little surprise. But it has not yet arrived; we will dine without it."

We sat down at the table, and the repast was very gay. They had killed a pig for the occasion, and the black pudding was a great success. We were having the coffee and had lighted our cigars when an artilleryman placed my gift in the drawing-room.

We passed into the room where the object lay on a table, wrapped in a frosted paper tied with a blue ribbon.

"What can that be?" said Madame Dutailly.

"Do not open it, dear madame; it is a shell."

"A shell?"

"Dutailly has often expressed his desire to have a shell, a genuine one that had been used, and my friend Roland, commander of a battery, at my request, sent me one from the plateau d'Arron which failed to explode in falling."

While speaking I untied the blue ribbon and tore off the paper. The shell appeared, black, sinister, menacing.

"Zounds!" said Dutailly. "You delight me. I will hang it in my cabinet."

"But," said Mme. Dutailly, anxiously, "if it has not exploded?"

"Don't be nervous; it was agreed that Roland should send me one unloaded and empty. See his letter."

I opened a letter pasted on the side of the shell and prepared to read it aloud, but at the first line my countenance expressed surprise, then anxiety, for every one exclaimed:

"What is the matter?"

"Alas," I said, "listen, and I will read it:

"'Dear Friend—I send the shell requested. Only it has been impossible to find an artillery man who knew how to unload it. Make him carry it to the house of the armorer near the entrance to the opera-house, who can do it very skilfully. Take the greatest care. The least blow, the least friction, for it is only the thickness of paper, and the shell will explode——'"

I was interrupted by cries of fear.

"Take it away," cried Mme. Dutailly. "It is terrible! this shell in my drawing-room!"

"Alas!" said I, extending my hand.

"Do not touch it."

"Be calm! be assured! The artillery-man who brought it will take it away."

"But, sir," said the servant, who stood trembling on the doorsill, "he has already gone."

New exclamations.

"Then," said I, "it is I——"

"I forbid you," quickly cried Dutailly. "You have

not the strength to carry that all the way to the opera-house."

"You will only let it fall on the staircase or in the ante-room."

Madame Dutailly clung to me.

"Not you; it is too dangerous! not you!"

"This," said Dutailly, "is the deed of a soldier, of a strong soldier; happily the captain is that!"

"I!" said the captain.

"Yes, you are as strong as a Turk and can do such deeds. You play with balls and shells as a schoolboy plays with marbles and football!"

"Pardon me, pardon me," objected the captain, growing pale, "it is a shell—the devil! Can't you wait until to-morrow to have it taken away?"

"What!" cried Madame Dutailly, "to-morrow? Why, I cannot close my eyes all night! I shall go to a hotel to sleep."

Then Anatole said, quietly:

"Remain at home, madame; I will carry away the shell."

Dutailly stopped him.

"You are a fool, my dear boy, just convalescent with your weak arm. Do you wish to blow up the house?"

"Truly," said I, "this is not the task of a weak man."

"But the captain," said Dutailly, "I have confidence only in him. Go quickly, captain, take the monster and deliver us from this nightmare."

The captain at this moment felt badly, that was evident, but he was not disconcerted by so small a matter. "Surely," said, he smiling, "that is my right. I only wished to say, as you interrupted me several times, that to take this object and to walk is too dangerous. It is slippery, and a single false step might kill ten people in the street. To take it in a carriage is the only way."

"But a carriage," replied Dutailly, "at this time? "They are nearly all required for ambulances."

"True," said the captain. "Gen. Smith, who brought me to your house, dines at the Brabant, and his carriage is waiting at the door of the restaurant. I will

ask him to loan it to me, as he is a friend of mine. It is done. Taking time to buckle on my sword belt and go there, it will be ten minutes or a quarter of an hour more."

"Go quickly," said Mme. Dutailly, "I shall not live longer than that time."

"I will run, dear madame." Saying this, the captain took his military cap and cloak and went. By the way he ran down the stairs it was evident he was in a hurry.

I went back to the drawing-room, where fear reigned. Mme. Dutailly wavered between the wish to fly and the desire to watch over the shell. Without seeming to do so, I looked out into the moonlit street.

"It would have been so easy to let me take it," murmured Anatole.

"Be silent," replied Dutailly, a little surprised by the quiet courage of this boy. "It is better the captain should do it."

"Provided," groaned madame, "he does not wait too long."

"He will wait, dear lady," said I gayly. "You may count on that. For he will never come back."

"He will never come back?"

"Certainly not. The way to go to the Brabant house is to take the right-hand street; he went to the left, and very quickly."

"What do you mean?"

"I wish to say, friend Dutailly, that your captain is an impostor, and I rejoice to have dismounted the batteries of this boaster by the aid of this engine." Then taking a photograph album, I struck a blow on the top of the shell, which broke into a thousand pieces —of chocolate, and scattered on the carpet a volley of sugar-plums, burnt almonds and pistachio-nuts.

A shout of laughter greeted the explosion, and, I may say, the climax.

Three months later Anatole married Gertrude.

And the captain was never heard of after.

The vagaries and the horrors of remorse are seldom more strongly depicted than in this original sketch, which has been written for ROMANCE by L. H. Bickford.

THE MAN WITH YELLOW BLOOD.

QUIETLY, at first, a small gray-and-yellow advance army-cloud having captured the scarred snow-banks on the mountain-tops, the morning dawned on Battle Mountain. Up on the hillsides, the mines, with their streaked, lumpy ore-dumps hanging to the steep cañon-walls as wasp-nests hang to the eaves of buildings, were starting for the day. The machinery labored and shook, and breathed and rattled in the dry, fresh, morning air. Down the straight chutes leading from the dumps into the cañon, the ore was already crushing and tumbling on its way. Over the twisted, brown-and-black road, the miners, sometimes in groups, sometimes in twos, sometimes one alone, pushed their way to work, their dinner-pails faintly reflecting a reflected ray from the west, for the sun is long getting up on Battle Mountain, and shines at second-hand very early in the day.

Pedro Boca kicked the blanket covering from two strong legs, jumped out on the dirty floor of his square cabin, and, as was his way, threw open the door of the shanty while he dressed. He sang a little and then swore a little—all in Spanish—and then drew on a dirty grey shirt over his dirty but firm chest; kicked his dirty and strong legs into a pair of equally dirty overalls, and then went out and stuck his dirty head into the brook. Returning, he fried and ate his bacon and eggs, and then finished his toilet by drawing on a pair of miners' boots.

Forty feet below him the engine on the Crispin Mine chug-chugged cheerfully to itself, while the wheels whirred over the shaft.

Pedro looked across the cañon. The sun-reflection

had not yet reached his time-piece, the big boulder. Good; there were yet several minutes before he should go to work. He lit his pipe, reflected how much better it would be were it a cigarette, and went out to sit on a log and think. He thought of Mexico. And to think of Mexico was to think of several things—tomalies, for the first thing, for they reached his stomach, and Marie, for another, for she reached his heart. Marie and Mexico—well, one must have gold to see them, and it was for gold that Pedro had come up to Colorado.

As he mused of adobes and pepper and pretty girls, he looked down and saw something that caused him to stoop. It was a little reddish-yellow nugget, entirely smooth on one end and marked with a cross.

"Mio Dios!" Pedro muttered; "the gold stone!"

He had often heard of the gold stone. Among a certain class of Mexican miners it has always been a subject of legends and superstition. It would be impossible to say in just what light it is regarded; whether as synonymous with good luck or bad luck; but this is certain: The man who finds it, gives it away; and the man who steals it, is accurst. A tale has been told in Mexico that the man who possessed it would always be fortunate, if he did not think of evil on the first day the stone came into his possession. Otherwise, it would bring disaster and a sad end to its owner. It were better, on the whole, to be rid of it. With Pedro, but one thing was plain, no matter from what superstitious view he might regard the stone: he must clearly put it in his pocket, now that he had found it. This he did. And as he did so, old Guerron the Frenchman, who occupied a cabin a short distance away, came up and said it was time to go to work.

Pedro and Guerron worked in the same drift that day. The formation was soft, and the clayey talc fell thickly and heavily all about them. It was of a consistency that would not admit well of picking or of shoveling. It dropped, instead, in large white flakes; it was one of these flakes that struck Pedro directly on the head and caused him to vehemently utter several distinct and

varied Spanish oaths, mixed with a little English by way of effect. As he finished swearing, he thought of the gold stone.

"Was an oath a transgression?"

Bah, no.

Everybody swore—in Mexico; more, in Colorado. He reflected on swearing. He tried to think of everyone he had heard swear; and then he laughed; for who did not swear? It was harder to remember who did not, than who did. Had he not once heard a priest say Carajo? Even—even Marie——

No, no; there was one.

He sighed and turned toward the wall; as he did so, another big mass of the chalky mineral fell against Guerron and knocked him to the floor; and as the old man fell, there rolled from beneath his torn shirt some little hard yellow stones, twisted and swerved as they had been found in Nature's own pockets, down there in the cañon.

Nuggets.

Pedro saw them. People had said Guerron was a miser, and that he had stored some wealth somewhere, and would one day return to France richer, even, than the bonanza kings of the Rockies or Sierras. Certain it was that Guerron did not go up to the little camp that hung, like the mines, to the side of the mountain, and, of a Saturday night, join in the card games or drink in the bright saloons.

It was true then—Guerron did hoard his gold.

What a lot of it! Down to the planking that covered the wet drift, rolled these yellow little trifles, now taking a dainty red tinge, as gold will, in the very dim candle-light. How pretty they were! Pedro picked up a handful; and then a great trembling seized upon his strong muscles. What if they belonged to him? Then he let the nuggets fall.

He looked down, through the half-light, at the old man. He was trying to rise. The falling ore had blinded and stunned him, and he was just pushing away a heavy, pearl-tinted mass from his breast.

"Help me!" he implored.

Pedro went to the side of the fallen man. As he stepped over the wet planks, he felt something press hard against the palm of his right hand—the hand from which the nuggets had fallen. He looked down.

The gold stone.

He tried to think how it got there. Subdued and mellow, its light seemed to throb into his eyes.

Pedro grasped a shovel.

"Help me!" said the fallen man again; "I am hurt; I cannot get up."

Then there was a great throbbing roar in Pedro's neck and brain, the muscles of his arms contracted, and the shovel fell on Guerron's head. The old man did not cry out.

Pedro laughed and gathered up all the nuggets he could find. Some had rolled under the planking; some far down under the moist pieces of fallen tale, and some were stuck into the lower sides of the drift. The nuggets collected, his thoughts suddenly centered on the gold stone.

It was missing; no, there it shone with its quiet, glowing luster, a shining little square of light in the darkness—there on the floor of the drift. Now it grew dim, until it faded into a golden-red—now it increased in color until it was yellow-white.

Pedro tried to take it from the floor, and, as he bent down, his hands touched the head of the dead, and were covered with blood.

How the old man bled! Red and spurting the blood came from the ghastly hole in the head; and red and thick it rolled toward the gold stone.

Pedro watched it with a tense fascination, which increased to horror when he saw, as the red stream, growing like a small river, set toward the place where the gold stone lay, that the blood turned yellow. And then it became yellow even as it came fresh from the wound of the old man. It sprang out in great yellow jets. It hurried on in thick yellow courses. It leaped, and sputtered, and came on and on as though it would never end.

Pedro crouched weakly against the side of the drift. He would have pushed himself into the earth, if he could, to escape that oncoming stream of yellow which threatened to lap itself against his feet.

"It is the curse of gold," he thought, and, starting up, he ran toward the end of the incline like a man who was hunted. At the station he rang for the cage and went up into the dark shaft-house.

Once on top, he staggered out into the air.

He looked down—the earth was yellow. Above—the sky, stretching its long dome from mountain to mountain, was of brazen, oppressive gold.

There was no sun—only a heavy yellow light, that, from somewhere, flooded the earth with its sickly cold.

The man ran on, over the stones and yellow earth, up, higher even than the eagles' nests, and paused, blinded by the gorgeous glamour of gold, at the edge of a cañon-wall. He dropped on his knees and tried to look, before and around him.

Gold. Nothing but gold.

And then his limbs stiffened—slowly he felt the blood stop in his veins, and his body grow cold—not the coldness of ice, not even of death, for that he could have welcomed.

His body contracted and he fell at full length on the ground. He, too, was turning to gold.

"Mio Dios!" he screamed, "Mio Dios!"

He called for mercy.

"O God! I will atone—forgive!"

And suddenly the earth was green again.

The gold stone, only, danced before him.

He seized it, and flung it into the deep cañon before him; it bounded from a projecting rock, and he saw it no more. He looked backward, down the brown-and-green mountain side, toward the mine. They were carrying the torn body of a man out into the soft air.

He looked around again.

"Mio Dios—it was the curse of gold!"

And then he jumped.

That jump was death.

First love is notoriously short-lived. The experience of the young lover, however, in the following dramatic little tale by Emilia Pardo Bazan, is unique, and will never be forgotten by those who read it. It has been translated from the Spanish for ROMANCE by Mary Springer.

FIRST LOVE UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

How old could I have been at that time?

I am quite sure I was only about twelve or thirteen years old. Or I might have been fourteen. Surely, I was old enough to fall desperately in love.

If I cannot recollect when, I can at least remember how the tender passion commenced. As soon as my aunt would leave the house to repair to church for her evening devotions, I was very fond of stealing into her room, and ransacking her bureau-drawers, which she always kept in admirable order. These drawers were like a museum to me, for I always found some rare, quaint object there, and a subtile eastern perfume emanated from them. There were satin pin-cushions, discolored by age; lace mitts, folded away in tissue paper; small pictures of saints; sewing materials; a reticule of blue velvet, embroidered with beads; and a silver and amber rosary.

All of these things, and more, were to be found in the different nooks and corners. I would examine them curiously, and afterward put them back in their places.

But one day—how well I remember it! just as plainly as though it were to-day—I saw a gilt object gleaming in the midst of some old lace collars. I involuntarily thrust in my hands for it (rumpling the laces) and drew out a miniature painted on ivory, about three inches long, and inclosed in a gold case.

I was perfectly enraptured as I gazed upon it. A ray of sunlight flickered through the window-pane, lighting up this charming likeness, which seemed as

though longing to leave its dark prison-house, and come toward me. It was the picture of a most beautiful creature, such as I had never beheld before, excepting in my youthful dreams.. The fair lady might be about twenty years old. She was not a young maiden, not a tender bud, just about to open, but a woman in the full radiancy of her beauty. Her face was oval, but not very long; her lips were full, and parted in a smile, while her eyes drooped languidly, and she had a dimple in her chin, which seemed imprinted there by Cupid's playful touch. Her hair was dressed in a singular and graceful style. It was gathered in a knot, while a pyramid of puffs surmounted her temples, and there was a basket of braids on top of her head. This old-fashioned coiffure, ending at the nape of her neck, revealed all of its rounded lines, and also another dimple, still more shy and soft than the one in her chin.

As for her dress, it was of some light, gauzy material. A necklace of pearls rested upon her snowy bosom and upon the smooth surface of her low-cut bodice.

Her arms, which were worthy of Juno, were fully bared. Their taper extremities were fit models for a sculptor. But I am not exact in saying "extremities," for only one of her hands was visible. It held a rare lace handkerchief.

As I think now of my feelings at that time, I am amazed at the striking effect which the contemplation of that miniature produced upon me. Indeed, I was so carried away by my feelings that I held my breath, while I fairly devoured the picture with my eyes.

I had seen portraits of beautiful women in the illustrated papers, in the shop-windows, and also in the mythological pictures in my father's dining-room. A beautiful curve, an harmonious and elegant outline, would always captivate my gaze, which was prematurely artistic; but the portrait which I had found in my aunt's drawer, aside from its great beauty, seemed to be animated by a subtle vitality. One could see that it was not an artist's ideal, but the likeness of a real person of flesh and blood. The luxuriant tone of coloring seemed

to reveal, under the pearly flesh-tints, the rich, mantling blood, while the lips appeared eager to display the pearly teeth. To complete the illusion, there was a lock of real, silky, chestnut hair braided around the frame,—hair which had once, undoubtedly, surmounted that snowy brow.

As I have said before, the portrait seemed more like flesh and blood, from which only a glass case separated me, than a copy of the original.

I touched it with my hand; I warmed it with my breath. It even appeared to me that the warmth of that mysterious divinity communicated itself to my lips and circulated through my veins.

I was engaged in this occupation one Sunday when I heard footsteps in the hall. They were those of my aunt, returning home from her devotions. I heard her asthmatic cough, and her slow, gouty footsteps. I had barely time to replace the picture in its case, close it, and station myself at the window before my aunt entered. I assumed an easy and indifferent attitude. As she came in, she blew her nose vigorously, for the church had been chilly, and she had added a slight cold to her chronic catarrh.

When she saw me, her little, red-rimmed eyes twinkled merrily. Kindly patting me on the head with her withered hand, she inquired whether I had been upsetting her boxes as usual while she had been gone. Smiling roguishly, she added:

"Wait, wait! I am going to give you something to make you smack your lips."

So saying, she brought out from the depths of her pockets two or three flattened gum-drops, stuck together in such a manner as to be anything but inviting. My aunt's appearance was not appetizing enough to cause one to open his mouth, and devour such sweets.

Her great age; her ugly teeth; her bleary eyes; her sunken mouth; the parting of her hair, which was three inches broad; the scanty gray locks fluttering around her temples; her neck, as flabby and red as an excited rooster's crest;—faugh!

Of course, I could not manage to swallow the gum-drops.

A feeling of indignation, of manly protest, caused me to say energetically:

"I don't want them! I don't want them, I tell you!"

"You don't want them? How singular!—you who are as fond of good things as a pussy cat."

"I am not a child!" I cried, swelling with pride, and stretching myself on tip-toe, "I don't want candy."

My aunt looked at me with an expression half-ironical and half kindly. Finally, yielding to the feeling of merriment which I caused her, she lost all restraint, and burst out laughing, thereby revealing the cavernous depths of her mouth.

From that time onward, I could not get the miniature out of my thoughts.

Whenever my aunt went out, I would skip up into her room, open the case, take out the picture, and become absorbed in looking at it. After I had gazed long upon it, it was easy to fancy that the drooping eyes of my idol, glancing through their thick shade of lashes, fixed themselves on mine and that her bosom heaved with quickened feeling. I was even ashamed to kiss her, fearing that my audacity might displease her, so I only pressed her to my heart, or placed my cheek close to hers. All of my thoughts and acts bore some relation to the fair dame hidden in the golden case.

I often felt singular scruples in regard to her, and before I would enter my aunt's room, to look at the coveted miniature, I would dress myself in my very best, as I observed that young men did when they went to see their sweethearts. I often met boys of my age, who had sweethearts, and would eagerly display their love-letters, pictures, and tokens to me, asking me at the same time why I did not find some one, like them, with whom I might correspond. An inexplicable feeling of delicacy tied my tongue, but when they asked my opinion about their lady-loves, I would shrug my shoulders, and characterize them as ugly frights.

One day I went to see some cousins of mine who were

very pretty little girls. The eldest was not yet fifteen. We were looking at a stereoscope, when suddenly the youngest girl, about twelve years old, slyly seized hold of my hand. Turning as red as a peony, she whispered in my ear:—"Take this."

At the same time I felt something soft and cool in my hand, and saw that it was a rose-bud with green leaves. The little maid went off running, but looking back at me out of the corner of her eye. With a coy movement, equal to the chaste Joseph's, I cried in turn:—"Take this!" at the same time throwing the rose-bud in her face. In consequence of this slight, she would not look at me again, and spent the whole afternoon weeping. Even now, though she is married and has three children, she has not forgiven me.

As the time which I found to look at the miniature seemed far too short, I resolved to keep it in my pocket. Thus all day long I went around, hiding myself from people, as though I had committed a theft. I fancied that the picture, shut up in its case, could see all of my movements. If I felt like scratching myself, or had to tie up my stocking or do anything not in keeping with the exquisite delicacy of my ideal love, I would take out the miniature first, deposit it in a safe place, and would then feel free to do whatever I wanted to.

In fact, after I had stolen it, I was beside myself with joy. I would hide it under my pillow at night, and would go to sleep, ready to defend it. I would turn the picture to the wall, and would myself face outward, awakening numberless times during the night, with a wild fear in my heart that somebody might snatch my treasure from me. At last, I took it out from under my pillow and slipped it in my breast, and on the following day the imprints of the embossed frame could still be seen on my flesh.

The contact of that cherished miniature produced the most delightful dreams. The fair dame, not her effigy, but her own dear self, would come toward me to carry me off in a chariot to her palace. With a sweet, commanding air she would bid me sit on a cushion at her

feet, and would pass her fair hand caressingly over my brow, and my tumbled hair. I would read to her in a large missal, or would play on the harp, while she would deign to smile, and thank me for the pleasure my reading and singing afforded her. In fact, these romantic ideas completely filled my brain, and I was ready to personate either a page or a troubadour for the sake of my beloved.

With the working of my disordered fancy I grew thin. My father and my aunt observed my emaciation with great anxiety.

"At this critical and dangerous stage of development everything is alarming, "said my father, who would read medical works, and then anxiously study the dark circles under my eyes, my pallid lips, and, above all, my total lack of appetite.

"Go and play, my boy," he would say to me, while I would answer dejectedly, "I don't feel like it."

They began to invent amusements for me, and offered to take me to the theatre. They made me lay aside my studies, and gave me foamy milk to drink fresh from the cow. Then they drenched me in cold shower-baths to strengthen my nerves, and I noticed that, whenever I went to my father's room to bid him good morning, he would look at me fixedly, while he would feel me all over to see whether my muscles were strong. I would lower my eyes, determined to die rather than confess what ailed me.

As soon as I could free myself from my family's watchful care, I would hasten off alone again with my beloved. At last, in order to get nearer to her, I took off the cold glass which covered the ivory. I hesitated as I was about to do so, but love was stronger than the vague fear that the desecration caused me.

While I pressed my lips to the painting, and perceived the soft fragrance of the lock of hair, I fancied, even still more than before, that it was a living person over whom my trembling hands passed. I felt giddy. Overcome by my feelings, I sank on the sofa insensible, pressing the miniature to my heart.

When I came to myself, I saw my father, mother and aunt all anxiously leaning over me. Amazement and fright were depicted on their faces. My father felt my pulse, and shook his head, while he murmured: "His pulse beats very feebly, and seems about to stop."

My aunt, with her hooked fingers, was trying to get the picture away from me, while I mechanically endeavored to hide and keep it from her.

"But, my lad, let go of it," she exclaimed—"Don't you see that you are spoiling it? I shall have to scold you. Be a good boy, and I'll show it to you as many times as you want to see it, but don't spoil it! Let go of it, I say, for you are injuring it."

"Let him have it," said my mother. "The poor child is sick."

"Well, that's cool," replied the good old maid. "Let him have it? And who will paint another one like it, pray? Who will ever behold me again as I used to be then? Nobody paints miniatures nowadays. That is all ended, and I am ended, too, for I am no longer what I used to be."

My eyes were starting from their sockets in amazement. My hands let fall the miniature. I hardy know how I managed to stammer: "Yours? Is the miniature yours?"

"Don't I look as handsome as that to you, my boy? Ah, fifty years makes a vast difference in one's looks—though I don't remember exactly how long ago it was—for I have not kept track of time,—but anyway, nobody can take those years away from me."

My head fell forward on my breast, and I fainted again. My father took me up in his arms, put me in my bed, and afterward made me take several spoonfuls of port wine.

I soon became convalescent, but my passion for the portrait had disappeared. I never cared to enter my aunt's room again.

Here's a glimpse into the old Slave days. This little sketch was written for ROMANCE by N. B. Winston.

STEVE SINGIN' AT DE QUARTERS.

"Yo' ain' nuvver hearn 'bout Steve, is you, honey?" asked Aunt Milly, and I could see that the old woman was just in the mood for telling me a story.

"No, who was Steve?" I asked with eager interest. "Tell me about him."

"Yo' knows I uster belong to Cun'l Stokes. Dey lib out heah in Henry County, not fur from town. When I wuz a right young gal, Steve an' me tuk a gre't likin' to one nudder. Steve wuz de likelies' nigger on de plantation. Ole Miss sez, thar warn' no reason 'tall why we shouldn' git married, bein' ez bofe o' us sich likely niggers. So one Chris'mas, an 'twuz jes' 'bout de col'es' Chris'mas I uvver see, ole Miss bake a gre't cake, an' Steve hed a new homespun suit, an' I hed a cal'co frock,—yo' knows mighty few niggers hed cal'co in dem days,—an' sich a dance ez we did hab! All de qual'ty niggers in Henry County wuz thar. Jo Johnson, he play de fiddle, an' call out 'change pardners', ez sich nudder nigger in de state o' Virginny ain' nuvver know how to do. I 'members well, Steve ax me, 'Milly, yo' s'pose any dem niggers at Millbrook uvver gwi' hab a weddin' like dis?' Millbrook, yo' knows, chil, wuz whar Mister Taylor lib, an' he dribe he niggers mighty hard. Bacon an' hoe-cake an' 'lasses 'bout de bes' any dem uvver see. Weddin's warn' no 'casion wid 'em. My ole Marster wuz mighty clos' fisted, but 'twuz ole Miss always doin' sumfin' fur de niggers. She seem like she feel sorry 'bout thar bein' ez dey wuz, an' of'en I done hearn her sez, 'Asa, don' dribe 'em so hard. Dey's human bein's, yo' knows.'"

"But what about Steve? Tell me about him?" I interposed.

"Law! yass, honey. Well, I s'pose me an' Steve wuz 'bout de bes' content'd niggers in Henry County. Couldn' nobody help like Steve. I sees 'im now, so tall an' strong, gre't big nigger wid clean face,—ches' jes' like a' ox, arms so strong, tek a bale o' hay an' pitch hit up de lof' an' nuvver know he done toch nuffin,—mouf full o' de whites' teeth I done uvver see—an' 'fo' Gord, I 'member his voice jes' like I hearn hit yistiddy. We uster sing down at de quarters of a nights, an' mos' always de res' would all drap 'way, an' leave hit all to Steve. He sing so low an' rich, jes' like de summer win' in de trees, an' seem like he always sorter sad too when he sing. Hit mek 'em all mighty quiet. I can' furgit dat nigger. I's tried mighty hard nigh on forty year, but thar ain' no use tryin'. When I thinks 'bout dem nights down at de quarters, an Steve singin', an' all de todder niggers kinder lis'enin', skeered like, I feels like a gal agin', an' I jes' thinks, Steve sho' is somewhar 'bout."

"What became of Steve?" I asked.

"Yass, yass, honey!" she answered, recalled to the thread of her story. "Jes' thirteen months hit wuz; things wen' mighty bad. Ole Miss, she tuk to her bed. Ole Marster, he hed troubles sho', fust wid dem boys. Dey wuz mighty wile, dem boys wuz, an' cos' ole Marster sight o' money fust an' last. An' den 'twuz 'scurity money. I ain' nuvver see nuffin like de folks in Henry County fur payin' 'scurity money, an' hit jes' bin de ruin o' ole Marster. Steve bein' sich a likely nigger, an' thar bein' no doubt 'bout 'im sellin' well, ole Marster sont 'im to Richmond, an' de nigger traders buyed 'im. I hed a baby den, jes two days ole, an' ole Miss sez, 'Come what mout, she gwi' keep Milly sho', mek no diffunce 'bout nuffin'.' Ole Miss kep' me an' dat chile, but whar dem nigger traders kyar'y Steve an' sell 'im ain' none o' us nuvver know. Ole Miss sez, she wuz gwi' fine out, an' buy 'im back some day, but she didn' nuvver git well, an' thar warn' no body else nuvver thunk nuffin 'bout hit."

"But you have children and grandchildren, aunt Milly. Did you ever marry again?" I asked.

"'Twuz a mighty long time, honey. Ole Marster try to mek me hab fust one nigger, den nudder, but I wuz mighty keen at gitting scuses. Fust, I hed to nuss ole Miss; den dat chile o' mine tuk sick, an' 'twuz full a year I wuz tekin' keer o' hit, an' den de po' thing ceasted, like ez ef I warn' to hab nuffin o' Steve lef', an 'den I did'n keer much, an' so I married one o' dem niggers over from Millbrook—William Lewis. He wuz a mighty good man, an' done mighty well by me, but ain' nuffin nuvver mek me furgit Steve, an' dem nights he uster to sing down at de quarters."

The similarity of all lovers, whether they be men or women, is illustrated in this ingenious story from *All the Year Round*. But, after all, it is a likeness that rather pleases us. It shows that sentiment, even when it degenerates into sentimentalism, does not, at least, rob the soul of nobility.

THE THIEF IN THE GRANGE.

CHAPTER I.

VERY DISAGREEABLE.

"I AM glad you have come in, Wilfred. I want to speak to you. Something very disagreeable has happened," said Mr. Caringham, the master of Everleigh Grange, to Wilfred Power, his ward and private secretary.

"I am sorry to hear that. What is it?" asked Power, a dark, good-looking man of about seven-and-twenty.

"That money you fetched from the bank this morning—I can't find it. I put it in this drawer. You know where I keep money, usually; and I had some other money—French notes, and the lot has gone."

"Gone!" exclaimed the other. "Do you mean that it has been stolen?"

"I don't want to use a word like that," replied Mr. Caringham, who was a mild, good-natured, and rather nervous man. "I should be very sorry to think the old Grange had a thief in it. But I'm almost sure I put the money in this drawer."

"I know you did," answered Power; "I saw you do it. There were two rouleaux of gold and some loose sovereigns—about eighty pounds in all—and a few notes."

"I thought you were here. Well, it is gone. I suppose I forgot to lock the drawer. I really ought to trust these things to you; you are so much more thoughtful than I am. Anyway, when I came in about an hour ago, I found the drawer unlocked; and when I looked

for the money I couldn't find it. It is very disagreeable."

"Disagreeable!" repeated the other. "It is a great deal worse than disagreeable. But have you looked everywhere? I suppose you did not take the money out afterward and put it anywhere?"

"No. Besides, I have been out nearly all the time."

"What time did you discover the loss?"

"About an hour ago—that would be about six o'clock."

"Well, it is very extraordinary. I was working here, looking into these papers about Meadowley Farm, until lunch; and I came back after lunch, and did not leave the room until past four o'clock, when I walked over to Meadowley to get some more particulars of the stock. So it must have happened between four and six o'clock. Had we not better question the servants?"

"No, no," replied Mr. Caringham. "I would not for the world have it get about the place that we have a thief here. Leave things alone, and, if we keep our eyes open, something will probably show where the money has gone, and then we can quietly get rid of whoever the—the person may be," he said, avoiding the word thief. "Never mind the money. I had no right to be so careless as to leave the drawer open. It serves me right."

"You must tell Miss Caringham," said Power. "It will be necessary for every one to be careful."

"I'd rather not; girls do chatter so abominably. But I suppose you are right, and that Maline ought to be put on her guard. Here she comes, I think."

A horse cantered quickly up the drive, and a moment afterward a girl's voice was heard calling:

"Papa, papa, where are you?"

The library door was opened by a quick hand, and a bright young girl of about twenty ran in, looking bewitchingly pretty in her habit, her cheeks flushed with rapid riding, and her fair hair slightly disarranged.

"Oh, papa, I am nearly out of breath. I had to ride so fast, and dear old Ruby was so tiresome and would not canter. It was all either joggle or rush; and at

last I was obliged to let her have her head and gallop home. I was afraid I should be late. I couldn't get out till very nearly six o'clock, for I was in here, and that novel I was reading positively chained me down to your chair there. People ought not to be allowed to write books that keep other people from going for their ride at a proper time, ought they? But it was very much your fault, too, Mr. Power," said the girl, glancing mischievously at him, "because I couldn't get in here till four o'clock. But," she broke off suddenly, looking at them both, "what is the matter? You both look as grave as deaf mutes. I'm not very late, am I? Not too late to be forgiven, am I, daddy?"

She said this very caressingly, and went close to Mr. Caringham and put up her face to be kissed, like a spoiled child.

"No, my darling, no," he answered, smiling at her as he kissed her.

"I thought not," she answered, with a merry laugh, adding, with assumed seriousness, "if I were very penitent, you know. But what is it? Has something gone wrong somewhere? Is it another of those horrid farms going to be empty? You'll tell me, Mr. Power, won't you?" she said, turning to him with a pretty gesture of supplication, "even if papa won't?"

The man would have done almost anything in the world she asked him; for in his quiet, reserved nature was a great fire of love for the girl. But he did not reply, leaving Mr. Caringham to answer.

"Well," said the latter, in a hesitating way, "the fact is, Maline, I have lost some money."

The girl changed her manner directly, and went to her father's side and put her arm in his as she said, in a way that showed the true womanly sympathy that was in her nature, and touched both men keenly:

"I hope it is not very serious, dear; not more serious than we can bear together."

And she took his hand in hers and kissed it.

"No, darling, no," said the father. "Not serious in amount, but disagreeable and disquieting in the way

in which it has gone." And he told her what had happened.

"Yes, that is certainly very disagreeable, and I hate to be suspicious. Are you sure you put it in the drawer at all?"

"Yes, quite sure. Wilfred was here when I did so."

"What do you think about it, Mr. Power?" asked the girl.

"I do not know what to think, and you have made the puzzle greater."

"I?" said the girl, quickly turning to him, "how is that?"

"Because, during the whole time since the money was put in the drawer until the time of the discovery the soom seems to have been occupied first by me, then by you. I confess myself beaten."

"There must be some mistake somewhere. I should think you'll find the money, papa. But I must go and get my habit off. I will promise to be cautious about my things; but I have always left them about, and never lost a pennyworth of anything."

"Maline," said Mr. Caringham, calling her back for a moment and shutting the door, "be careful, my child, not to breathe a word about this in the house. I wouldn't have it get about for ten times the amount of the money."

"Very well, papa," she answered; "I'll not speak of it to a soul."

CHAPTER II.

WHAT WILFRED FOUND IN THE LIBRARY.

THE comfort of the little household at the Grange was very much affected by the unpleasant incident of the theft of the money, and though each of the three who knew of it searched everywhere, and endeavored to find some trace of it, no result followed.

Three days after the discovery Mr. Caringham was called away on magisterial business to Quarter Sessions, and Wilfred shut himself up in the library, determined

to finish some accounts which had given him some trouble.

At lunch, Maline told him she was going for a drive to the little town near to make some few purchases; and shortly after lunch she came into the library to him, dressed ready for starting, with her purse in her hand, to ask some trivial questions about some one in the town. She staid a few minutes until her pony carriage was announced, when they rose together and went out.

Wilfred stood a short time by the little carriage, while a suggestion of his was carried out—that, as Maline was going to drive, one of the ponies should be put on the curb instead of the snaffle. And then he watched her as she drove away down the avenue.

The first thing that caught his eye when he went back to the library was the purse that the girl had left on the table. He picked it up and ran out, thinking to call her back, but one of the maids, standing in his way in the hall, rather clumsily hindered him, and the carriage was out of sight when he reached the steps.

He carried the purse back into the library and tossed it down on the table in a hurry to get on with his work.

The catch was faulty, and the purse opened as it fell, one or two of the coins rolling out. He picked them up to replace them, and glanced as he did so into the purse.

To his amazement he saw two French one-hundred-franc notes, clumsily folded, lying in the purse. The number of one of them was on the top, and he could not help reading it.

It was the number of one of the stolen notes. He knew this because Mr. Caringham had given them to him to enter when they had been received some weeks before, and after the theft he had referred to the entry.

He closed the purse and placed it where it had been left by the girl. Then he sat down to think.

What could it mean? How came the stolen notes in the girl's possession?

He could do no work with that thought in his mind. More than that, he could not bear to be in the room

when she returned for the purse. He hurriedly put his papers away and went out into the air.

Could she have taken the money?

He tried his best to put the thought away from him as he hurried on as fast as he could walk along the roads, but it kept recurring with every corroborative circumstance that seemed to grow out of the strange discovery.

He was so absorbed that he noticed nothing; and, as he turned a sharp twist in the lane, he would have been knocked down if he had not sprung quickly to the side when some one called to him out of a carriage which was being driven swiftly toward him.

It was Maline, and she pulled up sharply.

"Why, Mr. Power, I thought you were going to be at work?"

He looked up quickly and saw, or thought he saw, signs of anxiety in her face as she continued:

"I have left my purse at home, somewhere, and have to drive all the way back to find it."

"Why, would they not give you credit in Marshley?" he asked, trying to make his voice natural, but failing so much and appearing so constrained that the girl noticed it.

"It is not that; but there is something in the purse I particularly want—some patterns, and so on."

And again the man thought he could see that she was very anxious.

"You left the purse in the library," he said looking at her. "I saw it after you had gone and tried to catch you with it, but could not. You will find it there now."

This time he was certain that her manner showed confusion, as she gathered up the reins of her ponies and drove off, saying:

"Then I must make haste and fetch it. Good-bye."

A fierce struggle raged in the man's mind as he continued his walk for some hours through the woods and lanes, and when he reached the Grange just before the dinner hour, he was disquieted and agitated.

He saw Maline in the drawing-room a few minutes

before dinner. They were waiting for Mr. Caringham, who had come in later than usual, and he said to her:

"Did you find your purse all right?"

"Yes, thank you," she answered; but in a manner so completely different from her usual tone that he looked at her in astonishment.

She returned the look steadily enough; but she seemed so serious and grave that he was startled.

"I am glad of that," he said.

"But I am afraid I disturbed your papers," she said, not looking at him, but staring out of the window and speaking in a voice that trembled. "I knocked your blotting pad on to the floor and scattered the contents; but I tried to put them back, as far as I could, in the same order."

"It is not of the least consequence," he answered. And then they said no more until Mr. Caringham came down, and they all went to dinner.

During that whole of that night Wilfred Power did not sleep. All the facts of the robbery—as he knew them, and as they were colored by the light of the day's discovery—were reviewed by him, time after time.

The sight of the notes in the girl's purse; her evident anxiety to get back quickly from her drive to secure the purse; and her manifest trouble and agitation when he next saw her and asked her about it—a condition of mind that had lasted the whole evening—perplexed and confounded him.

Try as he would, he could not get away from the conviction which, though it at first had seemed impossible, had afterward gathered weight—the conviction that she had, for some reason, taken the money.

Then he tried to think what must be the consequences to her of discovery. What would the father think of the child he almost idolized if he had to know her as a thief?

This thought pained him beyond measure.

He loved the girl with all the force of his nature, and the father had been to him as a father; had taken him when young and friendless, educated him, and treated him just as a son.

Could he do anything to avert the blow which he saw must fall upon Mr. Caringham if once the fearful truth were known?

Out of his thought grew a resolve that was quixotic but quite characteristic of the man; he would endeavor to draw upon himself Mr. Caringham's suspicion, and so shield the girl.

He thought long and anxiously of the best means of doing this, without actually stating that he was the thief. And he decided to tell Mr. Caringham that he must go away, and to tell him in such a manner as to make him connect the departure with the theft.

He rose in the morning looking haggard and ill after the night of struggle, but firm in his resolve.

"I don't understand you, Wilfred," was Mr. Caringham's first comment, when the other told him he wished to go away. "What is it? What's the matter? What do you want?"

"I want nothing except to go away."

"Well, but—my boy, I can't do without you. You are just like my son—the dear lad whose place you have taken. Do you mean you want to go away for good and all and leave the old Grange? Tell me, my lad, why?"

"I can't tell you why, Mr. Caringham."

"Can't tell me why, Wilfred, not after all these years?"

"No; I can't tell you," answered the other, keenly touched by the old man's words.

"But it's so sudden. Can't you wait awhile—give me a little time to prepare myself? It will be like losing the lad over again." Then he paused and added: "Are you in any trouble, my boy? I mean, have you got into any kind of scrape? Tell me, and I'll do all I can for you."

"No, Mr. Caringham. I have a trouble, but none you can help me through," answered Power.

"Is it—is it anything to do with Maline?" asked the old man.

This was a home thrust, and made Wilfred wince.

"I thought you were such friends, and I hoped—but there, what's the good of hoping? Have you quarrelled, you two?" he asked.

"No, Mr. Caringham. It is nothing of that sort."

"Then, what is it? There must be something. It isn't—— But there, I won't hurt you by even thinking that you are leaving because of this confounded business of the theft. You're not the lad to leave a place because there is a bit of slur somewhere about it."

"Unless it were better that I should be away from it," answered Power, at a loss how to make the other suspicious of him.

"But it isn't better. Surely I know best about that. Why, if you were to go now, and this business were ever found out, people would say—by Heavens!—I don't know what they wouldn't say about you."

"Still, it might be best for me to go."

"How on earth could that be, lad?"

"Suspicion must fall on some one—and rightly," he added, in an undertone.

"Maybe; but not on you, my boy. Eh! what? What do you mean by that look? Speak out, boy; speak out," cried the old man, growing terribly eager in his anxiety at the other's manner.

"I cannot speak out. Even after these years, I dare not. But I must go, and I must go without an explanation, and leave you to think what you will."

"Don't say any more now, Wilfred, unless you want to kill me outright. I don't quite know what you mean me to think; but you have aroused such horrible thoughts that I can't bear any more now."

"Try not to think too hardly of me, for the sake of old times, and tell no one," said Power, as he went out of the room and closed the door gently behind him.

The old man laid his face in his hands as soon as he was alone, and murmured to himself in broken tones:

"A thief! A thief!"

He had rushed, like many people, from the one extreme of the impossibility of holding a suspicion to the other of absolute conviction.

He sat alone for a long time, and then rang and sent a servant for Wilfred. She returned and said Mr. Power had gone out, but had left a letter.

He opened it with trembling hands.

"Before I go away, finally, I should like to see you once more. I shall return to Everleigh in three days for this purpose, and this purpose only. Try to explain my absence if you can, and grant my request for one more interview. I am going now to Overton.—W.P."

CHAPTER III.

WHAT MALINE TOLD HER FATHER.

THE day on which Wilfred Power left the Grange was a very gloomy one, and both Mr. Caringham and Maline were low-spirited and depressed. Maline plied her father with questions as to the cause of Wilfred going, but he did not tell her, and put her off with general reasons, which only had the result of making her still more thoughtful and uneasy than she had been even on the previous evening.

She had asked Mr. Caringham plainly whether the cause had anything to do with the lost money, having her own reasons for the question, but he had replied by another question, asking in his turn how that could possibly be the case.

She felt certain that that was the reason, however, and wondered whether Wilfred had admitted that he had taken it; but she had not put this question to her father.

The next day was as gloomy as its predecessor; but, until dinner was over, she said nothing on the subject that was uppermost in both their thoughts.

Then, like a true woman, she opened her battery suddenly.

The two were in the library, where, as it was chilly, a little fire had been lighted; and Maline carried a footstool to her father's feet and sat down, resting her head on his knee, and began:

"Daddy," she said, caressingly, "did Mr. Power go because that horrid money was lost?"

Mr. Caringham started at the direct question.

"I told you before, Mal"—he only used this abbreviation of her name in moments of deeper feeling than usual—"that such a thing was impossible."

"No, dad; all you did was to ask me whether I didn't think such a thing was impossible. I have been thinking; and it seems to me most probable. Did he, daddy? Do tell me!"

"He did not say precisely why he was going away, Mal."

"Didn't he say anything more definite than that?"

"What he did say was not definite. I'm not at all sure that I understood him, either,"—adding under his breath, not for his daughter's ear, "and I'm sure I hope I didn't understand him." But she was quick, and caught tne words.

"Why do you wish you didn't understand, dad? Was it something very bad?"

"He did not wish me to say why he left," answered Mr. Caringham; "so you mustn't question me, Mal."

"Then it must have been something very bad," she said, not noticing his last words. "What was it, daddy? Do tell me; I'm so miserable."

He stroked her head thoughtfully before he answered.

"It would only make you more miserable, my darling," he answered, and spoke with a deep sigh.

The girl altered her weapon.

"I know it had to do with that money, papa." She spoke so earnestly and seriously that Mr. Caringham was off his guard directly.

"How can you know that, Maline?"

"Did he tell you who took the money, papa?"

"I would rather not talk about it, Mal," said Mr. Caringham.

"Well, perhaps I won't bother you after to-night any more about it," answered the girl, looking up and smiling sweetly; "but you must let me have my own way to-night. Do you know why?"

"No, my child."

"Because—because," and she paused a long time; and then kissed her father's hand, and laid her soft cheek upon it as she said, "I am going to tell you something that nobody knows, dad, nobody in all the world; and perhaps nobody ever will know, but you and me; and it will be our secret, won't it, daddy darling, our very own?"

"Yes, Mal, if you wish it. I think you can trust your old father."

The girl got up and sat on her father's knee, put her arms round him and kissed him fondly; but did not speak.

"You are crying, Mal," he said, very gently, "and your tears hurt me."

The girl hid her face on his shoulder, and whispered:

"I love him, daddy, with all my heart; and now I've lost him forever. I drove him away; and oh, dad, my heart is broken."

The old man felt the tears coming into his own eyes, and could not speak; all he could do was to press her hand and gently pat the head that lay on his shoulder.

His grief was that he could give her no hope.

Presently she grew a little calmer, and said:

"You'll tell me now, daddy, won't you, why he left?"

"Yes, darling, it was about the money."

"Did he tell you who had taken it, dad?"

"No, Mal, but he hinted it."

"He didn't tell you out plainly." She was very anxious to have this quite clearly told to her.

"No, Mal, he hinted, and only vaguely hinted, little one."

"Shall I tell you out plainly who took it? I know."

"No, Mal, no; no, don't tell me. Besides, you can't know." And he grew suddenly afraid that the girl was going to put in plain words what as yet was only suspicion, and then ask for Wilfred to be brought back.

"But I want to tell you."

"No, child, no. I don't want to hear."

"But those who are innocent may suffer. Listen,

daddy, and don't be too angry. Let me whisper it. I took the money, darling, and I'm so wretched."

"You took it!" cried Mr. Caringham, starting so violently in his surprise that he almost sent her off his knee.

"Yes, dad, I wanted some money to—to—to pay some old bills with, and I didn't like to ask you."

"But, my child, Maline——" he began; but she would not let him finish, stopping his mouth with kisses.

"Don't scold me to-night, dad, dearest; I can't bear it. I've been so miserable. I won't do it again—I won't really. And to-morrow I'll come to you and be scolded ever so much; because you mustn't forgive me without scolding me, and you mustn't scold me without forgiving me. And—and you'll send for Wilfred to come back, won't you?" she asked, in very low tones.

"This is a very serious thing, Maline," said Mr. Caringham, "and I——"

But she would not let him continue, throwing her arms round him and kissing him and actually smiling, until the good man could hardly look grave.

"No; but, Maline, tell me, where is the money?"

"The money," she said, biting her lips—"the money; oh, I paid it away, dear, for the bills, you know."

"But the French notes, child—you couldn't pay those away."

"No, dad, I couldn't pay those away; they—they must be upstairs. Don't question me any more to-night, dad, please. And don't look so serious."

"But it's such an extraordinary thing for you to have done, my child. If you had come to me——"

"Don't be angry to-night, dad," pleaded the girl.

"I'm not angry, Maline, but I'm afraid I am terribly grieved."

Then she put her arms about him and caressed him fondly, trying to comfort him with many winning, affectionate ways.

"I'll tell you all about it some day, daddy darling,

and then you'll see I'm not so much to blame as you think."

"Well, my child, I'll wait for that day. Try and let it be soon."

"And Wilfred will come back, won't he, daddy?"

"Yes, child, certainly. I shall send for him to-morrow."

"Then I'm so glad I told you." And she kissed him again and smiled, and then slipped off his lap and went out of the room, leaving the old man completely puzzled what to make of her words in view of what Wilfred had said to him before.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TRUTH.

WILFRED POWER was greatly surprised to receive a short note from Mr. Caringham, asking him to return at once. But he did so. Mr. Caringham explained the matter to him literally, interpreting Maline's action as a freak, and asking Wilfred not to go away, at any rate, for a time.

Maline's reception of him was curious, and there was something in the girl's manner he could not understand.

If he had not seen the proofs of her act, and known of her confession, he would have thought that she seemed rather inclined to take credit to herself for what she had done, and to receive him as if he were really a returned prodigal. She was so very gentle and tender that he was puzzled.

Matters were not, therefore, quite on the same footing as they had been, though no one made any reference to the lost money.

On the second morning after Wilfred's return Maline was alone in her room, when one of the old servants, who had been her nurse, came to her.

"If you please, miss, is this yours?" asked the woman, holding out a small blue paper to her.

"What is it, nurse?"

"I don't know, miss, quite."

"Where did you find this?" asked the girl quickly, coloring with excitement as she examined it.

It was a French one-hundred-franc bank-note.

"The laundrymaid, Susan, gave it me, miss, and told me she had found it among the clothes—she thought among yours," she said.

"Tell her to come up to me at once," said Maline.

When the girl came Maline questioned her closely and discovered that she had really found the note, wrapped up in one of Maline's handkerchiefs, and placed in the pocket of a dress belonging to one of the maids, who had been only a short time at the Grange and was under notice to leave.

The maid was sent for.

"Where did you get this, Rachel?" asked Maline, facing the girl, and eyeing her keenly.

The girl, taken quite by surprise, at first hesitated and colored, and then denied all knowledge of it. Then Maline told her where it had been found, and the other equivocated and contradicted herself; and at last, after a promise of forgiveness, confessed with many tears that she had taken the money.

Maline was as much surprised as the girl had been.

"Did you place one of these notes in Mr. Power's blotting-pad for us to find it there?"

"Yes, Miss Maline," answered Rachel, with a great burst of tears. "After I'd put two of them in the purse you left in the study. I watched him go out; and as your purse looked as if it hadn't been touched, I took the notes out again, and put one in Mr. Power's blotter."

"You put two of them in my purse, you say? When was that?"

"On Monday, Miss Maline. I slipped into the room while Mr. Power was seeing you to the carriage, and I saw the purse on the table."

The girl's answer was a revelation to Maline. She now saw, as by an inspiration, that Wilfred Power had gone away on her account, thinking she had taken the money, and thus had tried to shield her by drawing suspicion on himself.

"Where is the money? Fetch what you have of it."

"I have it all, miss, upstairs."

"Why did you do this, Rachel?"

For a long time the girl did not answer.

Then she confessed that she had a friend who was in great distress for want of money; when she went into the study at lunch time on the day she had heard of the trouble, she saw the money in the table drawer, and the sudden temptation was more than she could resist. What she had afterward done was merely to keep away suspicion from herself until the time for her to leave should arrive. She had thought that Wilfred Power would be most likely to be suspicious, and so she had first tried to draw his thoughts on Maline; and thinking she had failed, as the purse did not seem to have been opened, she tried to fix suspicion upon him.

"You are a bad, wicked girl," said Maline. "Go and pack your things and leave the house at once."

Mr. Caringham and Wilfred were both in the library when Maline entered.

"Is this the money you lost, papa?" she asked, quietly putting the gold and notes down on the table.

"Good gracious, Maline!" cried her father in amazement. "What does this mean?"

And then she told him.

Wilfred and Maline had a further and much longer explanation in the drawing-room after dinner that night, when Mr. Caringham was asleep in the library. At the end of it Maline said:

"And so, sir, you thought I was a little thief, did you, when you saw the notes in my purse, and tried to shield me by pretending you had done it?"

"Not more than you thought I was one when that note tumbled out of my blotting-pad, and you confessed to the theft. But you were a little thief after all, for you stole my heart, Mal."

"Then we were both thieves, for you took mine away ever so long ago."

And the lover's amen closed the dispute.

Poor Marpha is almost too much like "Patient Griselda," and "Clarissa Harlowe," to suit the taste of this generation. There are duties and duties. Between a mistaken sense of duty and her timidity, the beautiful young Russian serf had an unhappy time,—but there is something inexpressibly sweet and touching about these Russian stories, with their homely detail, and their straightforward, transparent action. This one was written by Lydia Paschkoff, and was translated for the Baltimore *American* by Elizabeth Wormeley Latimer.

MARPHA.

From 1848 to 1850 might have been seen nearly every afternoon on the Boulevard Nikitskoi, in Moscow, a very beautiful young girl, clad in rich clothes, shaped in peasant fashion. She was always in attendance on two lovely little girls about four or five years of age, and the party was followed by a footman in full livery.

Many persons used to stop and gaze at her with admiration. Common men had to content themselves with only looking at her beauty, but many a young man of fashion ventured to accost the little girls, pay them compliments or give them sugar-plums, and then asked the beautiful young woman who waited on them the name of the family in which she lived and whether she was a serf or free.

She always answered: "I am a serf. I belong to General Gertzkoff, and these little girls are his daughters. I am their *niania*."

Almost every day some stranger stopped and asked her the same question. Her beauty was remarkable. Her complexion was pure pink and white—"milk and roses," as the Russians say. Her face was a perfect oval of the Greek type; her eyes were blue as the heavens, with beautifully pencilled eyebrows; her teeth shone pearly white between her coral lips; her long fair hair was divided into two long braids, reaching almost to her ankles, and her carriage was alert and

very graceful. She was a lovely creature to behold—a serf whose value was inestimable.

It was one of her master's fancies that she should wear the costume of her native village, made of the richest silks. Her petticoat was always of blue or scarlet damask, her waists had wide sleeves, and were beautifully adorned with red embroidery; her headdress was a sort of turban, suited to her gown. Around her neck, by the General's express order, she always wore a triple chain of amber beads of singular transparency and beauty.

About four o'clock in the afternoon she used to take the children back from their promenade to their home, a stately mansion standing back from the street in the middle of a garden.

The General's wife lived in this house, and lived alone. She was very delicate and melancholy. The General usually resided at St. Petersburg, though he paid a yearly visit to Paris.

To facilitate the domestic management of his affairs, he had established a sort of office under his own roof (as indeed was the fashion in those days), where all money from his various villages was paid in, and contributions were received in kind. Several clerks were busily employed in connection with this office, and their superior, called Prohor, had orders to write a minute despatch every day to his master, informing him of everything that took place in his household down to the most trivial detail.

The clerks and all the servants were the General's serfs. There were about forty of them. The General had more than enough property of that kind to pick and choose from. He owned twelve thousand souls, and immense estates in one of the richest provinces of Russia.

Once in a while the General came home to see his wife and children. He never stayed more than a few days, and was glad to get back to St. Petersburg.

His wife never complained of her seclusion, but resigned herself to his neglect. She was very fair, very

frail and very feeble. She was adored by all the serfs —her own and those belonging to her husband. She was always kind and gentle to them herself, and had often saved many of them from severe punishments.

Niania Marpha, her little girls' beautiful nurse, was one of her great favorites. She was not able to look after her children herself, and had trusted them to this young girl with entire confidence from the day they were given to her.

One day, when the General chanced to be in Moscow, he was lounging in his library with Colonel Dmitrieff, one of the officers of his regiment. They were smoking long cherrywood pipes, with mouthpieces of amber, and talking over military affairs, when Marpha entered with the children, who came to bid "good-night" to their papa.

The Colonel was dazzled by the beauty of the niania. When she went out he said to her master:

"See here, Boris; I make you a proposal. I will give you my cook Basil, who has just finished his course of instructions at the English Club, and anything else you like to boot, if you will give me Marpha."

"No, no; I can't do that," replied the other quickly.

"Well, then," resumed the Colonel, "would you like my favorite coachman, Paul, a famous fellow about horses, my woman Daria, who embroiders so beautifully, and my handsome horse Emir to boot?"

"Don't ask me, Colonel. I wouldn't do it for ten horses or ten serfs, however skilful they might be," cried the General. "The girl is a good girl, and very capable. My wife is sick and cannot look after her children. If she had not this niania, I could not live in bachelor's quarters as I do."

"Well, but before long you will have to get some one who is more of a governess," persisted the Colonel.

"Yes, certainly. I am expecting a Swiss lady this very month. I have sent for her to Geneva. Still, I should not feel easy if Marpha was not with them. Who knows anything about those foreign women? They may be very good teachers, but they are not fit to take

charge of their pupils. Anyhow, my wife would never consent to part with her, and you will oblige me by saying no more on the subject. If you like, you may choose any other girl I own, and I will make you a present of her."

"No, thank you," replied the Colonel. "I don't want any but Marpha."

A few days after this the General departed for St. Petersburg.

The household went back to its usual routine. Marpha continued to take the children daily to the boulevard. Sometimes she would take them out driving in the park of Petrowsky. Sometimes they accompanied her to the stores to make purchases for her mistress, who was too sick to go shopping.

Silks she generally bought at a small shop in the Illinka. The master of this shop always came forward himself to wait upon her, and let her have greater bargains than his other customers.

He was a fine young man, with a full light beard—a pure type of the full-blooded Russian. One day he asked leave to carry a piece of rich velvet to Madame Gertzkoff, pleading that he would like to take that opportunity to implore her to listen to him on a subject that he had at heart exceedingly.

Marpha took the message to her mistress, who said that she would see him.

The young man came accordingly, bringing besides the velvet a basketful of delicate confectionery, which he implored the General's lady to accept from him.

Then, rallying all his courage, he began:

"I love Marpha. I know she is your serf. If your Excellency will allow me—and if Marpha does not look upon me with an unfavorable eye—I am anxious to purchase her for my wife at any price your Excellency may be pleased to ask for her."

"Ah, brother!" cried the General's wife, addressing him after the Russian fashion, "you are mistaken. Marpha does not belong to any of my villages. She belongs to my husband. You must ask him. Go down

to the office. Prohor, the chief clerk, will put your request into his daily bulletin. You will soon have an answer. I am aware that Marpha would be very happy as your wife. They say you never get tipsy, and that you are doing well in your business. It will cost me much to part with her, but if she wishes it, I will give her up to you. I will have her called, and you can speak to her."

Marpha came in blushing, being well aware of what was going on in her mistress' room.

"Marpha," said the gentle lady, "here is an honest fellow who wants to buy you and then marry you. I will write a letter myself to the General on the subject, asking him to listen favorably to the request (which must be made through Prohor) if you tell me that you wish to marry him."

Marpha hung down her head, and her face grew scarlet as a poppy.

"What do you wish, child?" said the General's lady.

Then Marpha fell upon her knees and kissed the kind hand that was held out to her, saying: "Please write, *soudarina;* and as long as I live, I will pray God to bless you!"

The lover, too, fell at the lady's feet, and thanked her warmly.

The General's wife sent for the head clerk, and said to him:

"Write to his Excellency that Sidoroff, the silk merchant, wishes to marry Marpha, and offers two thousand roubles as her purchase money."

"Will you pay that sum?" she added, turning to the silk merchant. "The General I know, will not take less. It is not long since he sold his confectionery cook, Ilia, for a thousand roubles, and he values Marpha far more highly."

"Anything your Excellency thinks right," replied the lover. "I will give more than that if necessary."

The daily report was made out in the usual manner and forwarded to the General.

THE GERTZOFF PALACE, MOSCOW,
Report of October 15, 1848.

Article 1. Received from the village of Davidono: Ten cartloads of hay, twelve sacks of flour, fifteen boxes of preserved fruit, one barrel of honey.

Article 2. Received in cash from the village Ivanono 4,000 roubles.

Article 3. According to your Excellency's order (received yesterday) sent your man, Andrew, to be a soldier.

Article 4. The mare, Star, has a foal.

Article 5. Sidoroff, the silk merchant, offers 2,000 roubles for Marpha. He wishes to marry her.

Article 6. Martinoff, the timber merchant, offers 10,000 roubles for the right to cut wood in the Forest of Davidono.

Article 7. Ignatius, the coachman, has been drunk for a week. This is the eighth day.

Article 8. Vanka, the scullion, was drunk yesterday, and made a disturbance in the kitchen.

[Signed] The Head Clerk.
PROHOR.

A week after the despatch of this report the General ordered his own clerk at St. Petersburg to return the following answer:

OFFICE GENERAL GERTZOFF'S HOUSEHOLD,
At St. Petersburg.

Article 1. His Excellency desires you to accept the 10,000 roubles offered by Martinoff, the timber merchant, for permission to cut wood in the Forest of Davidono.

Article 2. Ignatius, the coachman, is to receive fifty strokes of the knout and to be sent on foot from Moscow to St. Petersburg, with only money enough to buy dry bread upon the journey.

Article 3. The scullion, Vanka, is to be sent back to his village with orders to the overseer to set him to work cutting wood in the forest.

Article 4. His Excellency desires you to refuse the offer of the silk merchant, Sidoroff, and to reprimand Marpha for having dared to trouble her mistress about such a matter. His Excellency will not permit Marpha to leave the service of the young ladies till the youngest shall be twelve years of age.

When that time shall have arrived his Excellency pro-

poses to give Marpha her freedom, in recognition of her services.

Written by order of his Excellency.

ARTEMI, Chief Clerk.

Sidoroff and Marpha, in despair at this harsh answer, flung themselves at their lady's feet. She, poor woman, was almost as much grieved as they were at the ill-success of her intervention.

"Madame," cried Sidoroff, "I am worth 25,000 roubles. Will your Excellency deign to write to the General that I will gladly give them all for Marpha. If I work hard, I shall make another fortune. But life will be worth nothing to me without Marpha for my wife."

The General's lady ordered this new proposition to be entered on the daily report. Prohor, the clerk, obeyed and wrote.

"By order of her Excellency, I venture to put into to-day's report a new proposal made by Sidoroff, the silk merchant. He offers 25,000 roubles cash for Marpha. He implores your Excellency to listen favorably to his humble prayer."

The answer from St. Petersburg soon arrived. It was expected by two beating hearts. The St. Petersburg clerk replied as follows:

His Excellency was pleased to be extremely angry on receiving the report of the 16th instant. He desires you will write nothing more on the subject of Sidoroff, the silk merchant. His Excellency also desires you shall give orders to have the said Sidoroff turned off the place if he presumes to present himself at the palace. His Excellency orders Marpha never again to say one word upon this subject to her mistress, on pain of exemplary punishment.

[Signed] ARTEMI.

Marpha wept bitterly, and was ill for many weeks. At last she returned to her work pale as a lily.

Her mistress was very kind to her, and she was placed under the care of the best physician in Moscow.

Sidoroff sold off his stock of goods, and quitted Mos-

cow. To drown his grief, he took to drink, and travelled about Russia to its various fairs. At last he went off to a city in Siberia, where he married, some years after, in obedience to the wishes of his friends, who hoped marriage would steady him. Marpha continued to take care of the General's little girls with all the patience and tenderness she had ever shown them. Sometimes, however she would look at them so mournfully that the little things would cry, "O Marpha, why do you look so at us? What have we done? We will try to be very good."

Then Marpha would pick them up upon her lap and kiss them, saying: "No, darlings, you have not been naughty. You have never done me any harm. It was only——Kiss me, my pets, and always love your poor *niania.*"

Eight years passed away.

One day the General's lady summoned Marpha to her room and gave her a paper.

"The General," she said, "sends you your freedom. You are free to go or stay. You can leave me or stay here with my little girls, whichever you prefer."

Marpha kissed the hand of her mistress in silence, took the paper and retired.

Her heart beat fast at the sound of the words, "You are free," and then came the bitter thoughts, "Of what use now is my freedom? Sidoroff is married. Where could I go? If I return to my own village, how can I make enough to help my old father and mother? They hardly know me now."

She prayed nearly all night before the pictures hung up over her bed.

Next morning, before her fellow servants had had time to congratulate her on her good fortune, she went to her mistress, gave her back the paper and said:

"Keep it, *soudarina.* I do not want it now; it is too late! I ask leave to stay all my life with my young ladies."

"I will take care of it if you wish," replied the General's lady. "Stay with us if you will, but remember

you are a free woman; and, whenever you ask me for this deed, I will give it back to you."

In 1874 Marpha was a *niania* still. She was living as nurse with the eldest daughter of the General, who was married and had three children. Marpha then became doubly free, by the deed of manumission given her by the General, and by the act of general emancipation.

She is still living. She is still the darling *niania* of a group of little ones. She is fifty now; and is still very lovely.

The General and his wife are dead. Sidoroff is a great merchant and one of the rich men of Siberia. From time to time he visits St. Petersburg, where his sons and daughters now live. His sons are officers in the cuirassiers, and his daughters have made brilliant marriages.

One evening I was present at the Convent of Newski at the funeral of a person of distinction. When the ceremonies were over, I sauntered into the cemetery to examine the tombs. I came to that of General Gertzkoff. A priest and his assistant were standing over it, chanting a service for the repose of the dead. One woman was kneeling on the grass. No other person was present. When the prayers ended, she arose, put the customary three roubles into the hand of the priest, and, again bending over the tomb, she laid a wreath of flowers on the monument.

I recognized Marpha.

In common with most of those who were intimate in the Gertzkoff palace, I knew her story.

"Marpha," said I, "are you praying for the General?"

"Yes," she replied, "I have long forgiven all the harm he did me. It was God's will that my lot should be always among the lowly. Perhaps it was best. Our place on earth is of little consequence, after all. Two nights ago I dreamed about my master. I thought he cried, 'O Marpha, Marpha! The burden of my sins is more than I can bear. It is too heavy—much too heavy for me!' Three times I woke, and three

times I went to sleep, and dreamed the dream again. I told it to my pastor. He said I had better have prayers said for the repose of his soul. Doubtless he needs them in the other world. He made so many suffer when he was here. My story is not remarkable. I was better off than many of his other serfs. May God receive him when his sins are purged into the Kingdom of Heaven, and forgive him—even as I do!"

Her face looked heavenly as she prayed this prayer.

Marpha still visits the cemetery of Newski oftener than the General's daughters. Doubtless her petitions are twice blessed, and God, as the Psalmist says, returns her prayers into her own bosom.

The darkness and mystery of mines and the recklessness of miners constitute a never-failing source of exciting adventure. The following thrilling episode was told anonymously in the Kansas City *Times*.

A "WILD" BUCKET.

Big Sandy Thompson and Simpson, his partner, had finished filling the ore bucket with a goodly load of the tough, worthless rock in which they had been burrowing for months, and leaning on their shovels watched it go swinging slowly up toward the little four-by-seven patch of daylight that showed the entrance to the shaft, one hundred and twenty-seven feet above them.

Down the deep hole came muffled screechings from the rope as it wound upon the drum and the creaking of the ill-adjusted "whim," and they could hear Ike Wisdom's vicious objurations as he urged their sullen little beast round and round in the dusty circle in which he plodded.

Simpson was dumpish and morose. He scraped querulously in the rock dust with his shovel and roundly berated the luck that had sent him to Colorado to dig in a hole for nothing. He cursed Colorado and he cursed Park County; he cursed the bacon on which he subsisted until, as he pathetically said, he was "ashamed to look a hog in the face," and he cursed the mine and old Sandy Thompson, who sat idly pounding away a nice round hole he was finishing up with artistic care for the reception of a dynamite stick. Old Sandy grinned quizzically at Simpson through his bushy, red whiskers, and puffed silently at his malodorous black pipe.

Ike, at the top of the shaft, when the bucket came up, kicked the board under it. The lop-sided beast turned in his tracks and let the load swing down, and Ike tugged it out on the dump and emptied it with much panting and effusion of sweat. Then he dragged the ponderous tub back slowly. Empty, it was a pretty

good load for a man, being built of thick, oil-soaked staves, hooped almost solidly from bottom to top with heavy irons, and thickly incrusted with hard, heavy clay and bits of rock in every crevice.

Ike prided himself much on the dexterity with which he handled this big bucket by its great wrought-iron bail. He swung it jauntily over the mouth of the shaft and, as he had done a thousand times before with graceful success, kicked the board from under it as he swung the rope around to hook it in its place.

But the hook clanging against the bail failed to catch. The great bucket disappeared like a shadow into the shaft's dark mouth.

Ike lunged wildly forward to catch it, lost his foothold, and he, too, went into the shaft.

Down at the bottom of the hole, Simpson was still at his dismal cursings.

"I wish," said he petulantly, "I had never seen this cussed hole. I wish I was dead. I—good God, Sandy, the bucket's loose!"

Sandy's burly frame flew up like an acrobat's. In the twinkling of an eye he was pressed into the corner of the shaft, clutching back so hard against the rocky walls that the tips of his tanned fingers whitened.

Simpson dropped his pick, and he, too, was pressing the rocks, holding back his breath, flattening his outstretched hands against the resistless walls.

And still the open space in the centre of the shaft's bottom seemed scarcely big enough to drop a hat in.

Simpson tried to close his eyes, but tried in vain. They were fixed beyond the power of his will upon the falling bucket. He could see it dropping, lunging from side to side of the narrow hole. He saw it tear clouds of dust from the clay hardpan, saw it reach and strike the deepest layers of porphyry.

It bounded from side to side of the hole; striking now and again on a jutting fragment and tearing it loose, it rattled and clattered against the hard rock.

To Simpson, years, centuries seemed to pass as the bucket clanged and rattled against the side of the shaft.

He thought with all the vivid rapidity of men thus facing impending death. He saw the old home in the Missouri bottom lands, his mother's face and the face of the maiden who waited his return.

It was an actual relief to see that the bucket was coming faster now; wherever its iron-bound sides touched the porphyry they ground streams of sparks that glittered wickedly in the half darkness. Its rattlings and clangings had merged into a continuous ear-stunning roar. He made his eyes close at last.

There came a crash, terrific and resounding, and Simpson found himself standing stiffly against the rock wall, laughing feebly like a hysterical school-girl and stupidly fingering at a long rent in his flannel under which he was beginning to feel the smart of an equally long, red furrow scratched across his breast.

Across the tangle of twisted and bent hoops and splintered, riven staves that filled up the bottom of the shaft he saw old Sandy also standing sturdily up. Sandy was gazing up the shaft, his red whiskers bristling with rage. Simpson followed his gaze. He saw, hanging by his wrenched arms from the fifth round of the ladder that ran down the shaft, Ike Wisdom, twisting about to look down upon them with scared white face. He had caught at random upon the ladder as he tumbled into the shaft.

Sandy shook his fist at the clinging man vehemently. "Now, ye think ye're durned smart," he roared.

And they had to "lay off" three days while they went down the trail to Fairplay and lugged back the half of a coal-oil barrel wherewith they fashioned a new ore-bucket.

All the odd moments of those three days were spent in impressing upon Ike Wisdom the positive necessity of hooking the rope to the new bucket before he kicked away the board.

In future years, students will read pages of the bald statements of history regarding the bitterness of Alsace and Lorraine, upon their annexation to the German Empire, without getting one tithe of the understanding of the case which is bestowed by a vivid and touching picture like the following, by Alphonse Daudet. It was translated for the *Housekeeper's Weekly*, by Mrs. Carlton A. Kingsbury.

THE LAST CLASS.

THIS morning I was very late in getting to school, and was greatly afraid of being scolded, inasmuch as M. Hamel had told us that he should question us about the participles, and I did not know the first word of my lesson. Suddenly the idea came to me to miss the class and to extend my walk through the fields.

It was a charming day: so warm, so beautiful. One heard the blackbirds whistling in the outskirts of the woods; and in the Rippert meadow, behind the sawmill, the Prussians were drilling. All this seemed to me more entertaining than the rule for participles; but I finally resisted the temptation, and ran quickly toward the school-house.

Passing the mayor's office, I saw that a crowd had gathered in front of the bulletin-board. For a long time all the news had been received at this office and recorded on the bulletin-board,—the lost battles, the requisitions, the orders from the commander-in-chief; and I thought, without stopping to look, "What is it now?"

As I hurried along, the blacksmith Wachter, who was there with his apprentice, cried to me: "Do not hurry so, little one; you will arrive sufficiently early at your school."

I thought that he was mocking me, and, breathless, I entered M. Hamel's small yard.

Ordinarily, at the opening of the school, there was a great uproar made by the pupils' opening and shutting

their desks, repeating their lessons in a high key, stopping their ears in order to learn more quickly, and the master constantly pounding his desk with a huge ruler, and crying "Silence! silence!"

I had counted on all this to reach my desk unseen; but this morning everything was quiet; it was like a Sabbath morning. Through the open window I saw my comrades already in their places, and M. Hamel, who passed and repassed with the terrible ruler under his arm. I was obliged to open the door and enter in the midst of this awful calm. Do you wonder that I grew red with embarrassment and that I was afraid?

M. Hamel looked at me without anger, and said to me kindly: "Go, take your place quickly, my little Franz; we commenced without you."

I stepped over the bench and seated myself at my desk. Then only, a little relieved of my fright, did I notice that our master had on his beautiful green coat, his finely-pleated frill, and the skull-cap of embroidered black silk, which he never wore except on examination days and at the distribution of prizes. Moreover, all the school looked solemn. But what surprised me most of all was to see at the end of the room, upon the benches which usually stood empty, the village people seated, silent like ourselves; old Hanser with his three-cornered hat, the old mayor, the old letter-carrier, and many others; every one there appeared sad, and Hanser had brought an old spelling-book with torn covers, which he held wide open upon his knees, and, with his great bowed spectacles on his nose, followed the lines on the page.

While I was still amazed at all I saw, M. Hamel seated himself, and, in the same kind and grave voice with which he had received me, said to us: "My children, this is the last time that I shall teach you. The order has come from Berlin that nothing is to be taught in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine but German. The new master arrives to-morrow. To-day is your last lesson in French. I pray you to pay attention."

These few words completely dumbfounded me. Oh unhappy ones! And this was what was on the bulletin-board at the mayor's office!

My last lesson in French! And I, who hardly knew how to write,—I should never learn now! I should never know any more now! How I regretted all the time I had wasted, the classes I had run away from. My books, which I had always found so tiresome, so heavy to carry, my grammar, my sacred history, seemed to me old friends, whom it gave me great pain to part with. It was the same about M. Hamel. The thought that he was going away, that I should never see him again, made me forget the punishments, the blows of the ruler.

Poor man! It was in honor of this last class that he had put on his beautiful Sunday clothes; and now I understood why all the old people in the village had come and seated themselves at the end of the school-room. It seemed to me that they regretted not having come oftener to the school. This was also a means of showing their gratitude to the master for his forty years of valuable service, and their loyalty to the country which he was about to leave.

I had reached thus far in my reflections when I heard my name called. It was my turn to recite. What would I not have given to have been able to repeat that long, famous rule for participles, loudly, clearly, without a mistake! But I became confused at the first words, and I remained seated at my desk, with my heart full to bursting, without daring to lift my head. I heard M. Hamel speak to me:

"I will not scold thee, my little Franz; thou art sufficiently punished. This is the trouble. Every day thou hast said: 'Bah! I have plenty of time. I will learn it to-morrow.' Ah! that has been the great misfortune of our Alsace,—always putting off our learning until to-morrow. These people who have come here are right when they say to us: 'How! You pretend to be French, and you can neither speak nor write your language!' In all this, my poor Franz, thou art not

the only one to blame. We have all to bear our share in their reproaches. Your relatives have not been sufficiently interested in having you taught. They much preferred to see you all at work, farming or weaving, in order to make more money. As for myself, have I nothing to reproach myself with? Have I not often allowed you to water my garden, instead of having you learn your lessons? And when I wished to go trout-fishing, have I ever troubled myself that I was obliged to give you a holiday?"

Then M. Hamel began to speak of the French language, saying that it was the most beautiful language in the world, the most euphonious, the most expressive; that we must talk it constantly among ourselves; that we must never forget it, because when a people fall into slavery, so long as they retain their language it is as if they held the key to their prison.

Then he took a grammar and read our lesson to us. I was astonished to see how I understood it. All that he read seemed easy, very easy to me. I believe, also, that I had never listened so well. As for M. Hamel, it seemed as if he had never displayed so much patience in his explanations. One would have said that before going away the poor man wished to tell us all he knew.

The lesson finished, he called the class in writing. For that day M. Hamel had prepared some new copies which read, *France*, *Alsace*, *France*, *Alsace*. This was also on little flags which were hung around the schoolroom. How each one applied himself! What silence! One heard only the scratching of the pens over the paper. Once some May-bugs flew in, but no one paid any attention to them,—not even the little ones, who applied themselves assiduously to their copies. Under the eaves of the school-house the doves cooed, and I said to myself when I heard them:

"And why do they not oblige them to sing in German?"

From time to time, as I raised my eyes from my page, I saw M. Hamel immovable in his chair, and looking earnestly at the objects around him, as if he

wished to carry away the memory of everything in the school-room. Think of it! Forty years he had spent in that house and the little yard in front of it, and this room had been always the same. Only the benches and the desks were polished and worn with use; the trees in the yard had grown; and the hop-vine which he had planted encircled all the windows. What heart-break this man must feel, to know that he was looking his last on all those things, and to hear his sister passing back and forth in the chamber overhead, busily engaged in packing their trunks, for they were to leave the next day, never to return.

But he had the courage to keep the school to the end. After writing, we had our history lesson; then the little ones sang their *Ba-Be-Bi-Bo-Bu.* At the end of the room old Hanser, with his spectacles on his nose, his primer in his hand, spelled the words with them. One could see that he was in earnest, his voice trembled with emotion, and it was so droll to hear him that we knew not whether to laugh or weep. Ah! I remember that last class.

Suddenly the church clock struck mid-day, then the Angelus. At the same moment the Prussian trumpets sounded near the school-house. M. Hamel, very pale, rose from his chair; he had never appeared so grand.

"My friends," said he, "my friends,—I—I—I——"

But something choked him. He could not finish his sentence.

Then he turned toward the black-board, took a piece of crayon, and rallying all his strength, he wrote in huge letters:

"VIVE LA FRANCE!"

Then he stopped, leaned his head against the wall, and, without speaking, with his hand he made a sign:

"It is finished,—you may go."

Scientists are not usually men of sentiment; but the dear old gentleman (the reader will have no difficulty in distinguishing the "dear old gentleman" from the other one) in the following story by Alice Corkran seems to have successfully preserved both his tenderness of heart and the integrity of his head. The story is taken from the *Gentleman's Magazine.*

LOVE AND ANTIQUARIES.

Dr. Gregory was walking up the street in which stood the house of his friend, Sir William Fay. It was a steep street, austerely monotonous in its architecture; the August sun was hot; the elderly gentleman carried a heavy bag, yet he walked with a springing step. He was white-haired and of a fine open-air complexion. Notwithstanding a slight stoop, which betokened a dreamy habit of mind, there was a fire and a spirit about his whole appearance. His bright and hopeful eye, of somewhat abstracted gaze, kindled easily as he muttered to himself, and smiles played about his lips.

Dr. Gregory was an antiquary. He devoted his time and his energy to unburying the past. Enthusiastic by temperament, he was apt sometimes to overestimate the importance of the discoveries he made; nevertheless, the British Museum and some local collections contained some curious relics of Roman and Saxon times that he had presented. While digging in the neighborhood of a Roman encampment, he had lately come upon a square block of masonry ornamented with inscriptions, in relief, resembling nothing that he had yet found. The old gentleman was hurrying along to share with his friend the excitement and mystery of that find. Sir William Fay was a renowned excavator, of vast learning and judgment, who held a high official position. A warm friendship existed between the two men. Essentially different in temperament, community of tastes gave to their relationship the exhilaration of intellectual comradeship. If the truth must be told, however, Sir

William's feeling for Dr. Gregory was one of affection for the man himself rather than that of trust in his judgment as an archæologist. To the doctor, who was an old bachelor, friendship with the eminent scientist was the solace and delight of his solitary and studious life.

Dr. Gregory, not being the most patient of men, felt inclined to fume at being kept waiting on the doorstep. With the abruptness of intimacy he burst into his friend's study and cut short his greetings.

"My dear Fay," he said in tones of mystery, "you will never guess what I have in this bag."

"The bag and its master, in effect, seem charged with mystery," replied his friend, an amused glimmer flickering up into his faded eyes. He was a man of incisive countenance. His finely-cut features of classic mould were somewhat marred by what looked like an accidental bluntness of the tip of the nose and projection of the chin. His friends said that he resembled a bust of Jupiter fractured in the process of exhumation.

"I have something here that will surprise you, that will agitate you, my dear friend."

"Agitate me!" repeated Sir William, with skeptically humorous emphasis, the amused glimmer, not devoid of sarcasm, still brightening his glance as he regarded Dr. Gregory's face, radiant and twitching with restrained communicativeness.

"I must prepare you for this find. I think, Fay, I may say without conceit that I have made some interesting discoveries."

"You certainly have," acquiesced Sir William, inclining his head.

"Well, I have found," cried Dr. Gregory, with a burst of sublime confidence, "a fragment which I believe to be unique. You know that encampment I have been digging through? Well, I have dug below the Roman city into the early Briton period. Fay, I believe I have found there the trace of an early civilization—a lost civilization."

"Take care! take care!" said Sir William, in a tone

of humorous warning. "We old antiquaries are apt to be all too credulous."

"Credulous! You will judge for yourself. I am tolerably familiar with the great European museums, and I do not remember in any one of these national collections having seen such a fragment. Its shape, the inscription upon it, the position in which I found it, all add to its mystery; all deepen in me the conviction that it is unique."

"Take care, that's all I say; take care, Gregory; I know you of old. You are an enthusiast!"

Dr. Gregory made an impatient gesture as if about to open the bag, but he restrained himself. Affecting carelessness, he pretended to examine the treasures around. In the overwhelming importance that he attached to his concealed exhibit, he thought by this simple device to pique his friend's curiosity and to draw from him the request to see that extraordinary relic.

To his mortification, Sir William Fay seemed to have forgotten all about it, and rambled off gayly to his own topics, describing the plan he proposed to adopt in directing certain excavations he was about to undertake in Asia Minor.

"Are you not interested in the important discovery made by your friend?" at last asked Dr. Gregory reproachfully.

"Its importance, my dear Gregory, I do not pretend to estimate," replied Sir William, the gleam of mocking light returning to his glance. "You know we old antiquaries are getting a little weary of that word."

With a seriousness too profound for comment, Dr. Gregory unpacked the broken fragment and held it up at arm's length. "There!" he said.

"Where?" asked Sir William, with short-sighted gaze coldly passing over the fragment.

"Have you eyes?" asked Dr. Gregory, with the calmness of irritation.

"My dear Gregory," replied Sir William, in a tone of bantering protest. "I see perfectly what you are show-

ing me, but really your preface led me to expect something amazing!"

"I am aware," said Dr. Gregory, restraining the irritation that was making his temples throb, "that there are two specimens of sepulchral carvings, somewhat similar, perhaps, of immense antiquity in the —— Museum."

"I fail to see a third, my friend," replied Sir William with courtly chilliness. He put his glass to his eye. "Let me see—very interesting, very curious—but, my dear Gregory, I should say centuries later than the carvings to which you allude."

"I will not allow myself to be vexed, Fay," said Dr. Gregory, with great effort controlling the excitement that was gaining upon him, "but—pardon me for saying so— I do not think you are perfectly sincere. My dear fellow, there is something quite unworthy of you in all this."

"My dear Gregory," replied Sir William, with polite irony unlike the asperity of his more real tone of affection, "let us make short work of this difference between us; let us compare this specimen with the undoubted antiquities in the museum. Come along, I will show you the points of differences."

"Fay!" cried Dr. Gregory, flushing purple, "I am too old to be lectured by you. I am experienced as a scientist. I venture to say that of such antiquities I am a better judge."

"You are too credulous, Gregory, to be a judge. The true scientist approaches every question of the kind with a wholesome incredulity. Now, there is old Mr. Goldbeater." Here Sir William Fay indulged in a profane story of the archæological blunders made by a silly quasi-antiquary. Poor Dr. Gregory's temper completely gave way on finding himself ranked with an ignorant amateur. With a snort of indignation and trembling hands he packed up the precious fragment in its wrappings, returned it to the bag and made for the door.

As he held it open, "Fay," he said in a muffled voice,

"this ends our friendship. I came to you in openness of heart; you have returned my confidence with insult. I do not wish to have any further intercourse with you."

He banged the door after him and left the house.

One evening, a week later, Dr. Gregory was sitting alone in his study. A melancholy was over him. The lamplight glinted on fragments of mosaics, on broken tiles, on bronze weapons steeped to the hilt in the romance of war, on statuettes of visionary mould. The giant lullaby of the past, which so long had soothed him, had been rudely interrupted by the intrusion of the present's pain. He had not heard from Sir William Fay. The sundering of the old friendship gave the lonely bachelor acute pain.

Dr. Gregory was going once more over all the details of that quarrel, when the servant announced Sir William Fay's son, Fred.

The elderly gentleman felt a spasm of pleasurable anticipation at his heart. Had Fred come on a mission of reconciliation? He disguised his emotion as he greeted his guest, pressed hospitable offers upon him and talked on indifferent topics. He noticed that the young fellow was moody and that his pleasant laugh was silent.

"The governor started on his travels two days ago," observed Fred after a moment's silence. "He and I have quarrelled."

"Quarrelled!" exclaimed Dr. Gregory, not averse to hearing that another had suffered from his friend's temper.

Fred moved uneasily, then he rose, went to the mantelpiece, put his elbow upon it and turned away his head.

"The fact is, I am in love!" He brought out the words with shamefaced abruptness. Then he resumed more naturally, "The governor won't hear of the engagement. If I marry, he says he will cut me off with a shilling."

Dr. Gregory looked at the youth with a blank expression. "Would the match be so unsuitable?"

"Unsuitable! Unsuitable for her. She ought to marry a king!" cried Fred, enthusiastically. He was a handsome youth, with a boyish brightness of glance and manner. "But she is willing to have me, and no one can stand in the way. No one." He spoke with a feverish rapidity peculiar to him when excited.

"What is the objection?" asked Dr. Gregory.

"She has no money. Her father ran through every penny. That is why the governor won't hear of it. But I shall go to the colonies; I shall live in the bush; I will do anything to make my fortune; then come back and marry her."

"What is her name?" asked Dr. Gregory feebly, overwhelmed by that young ardor.

"Amy! I mean Miss Ancelot."

"Amy Ancelot!" repeated Dr. Gregory with sudden emotion.

The young fellow nodded. "Do you know her?"

"Does she live at Manilhurst, in the vicarage?"

Fred gazed with a perplexed stare. "She lives at Manilhurst, and she is now staying on a visit at the vicarage."

"It is a delightful old house," said Dr. Gregory; "it stands in a beautiful garden. There is a sun-dial, and close to it a seat hollowed out in the wall. A passion flower grows over it."

"There is clematis now," said th e youth, still staring.

"You wonder," said Dr. Gregory, "how I remember that house and that garden so vividly. Twenty-five years ago there lived in it a girl, the most charming I ever saw. Her name was Amy Ancelot."

"Amy Ancelot!" repeated Fred.

Something in the ingenuous and mystified expression of the young man drew from the doctor the secret he had never breathed to mortal ear: "The mother of the girl you love lived there. I loved her."

"But how do you know she was Amy's mother?" asked Fred.

"My Amy married her cousin. She was the Vicar's

daughter. She continued to live at Manilhurst. She died five years ago."

"That is all true," admitted the young man. He hesitated, then he asked, "How is it you did not marry her?"

"She was very charming," said the old man. "She was charming to everybody. It was part of her nature to charm all those who came near her." Dr. Gregory paused, then continued: "She was incomparably charming. I sometimes thought she cared for me. I was poor. An opportunity presented itself to win distinction, perhaps fortune. You know I had done well at college. I was editing a classical work. A noted explorer offered to take me to Greece. I worked hard under him. I was away two years. My uncle died suddenly, and made me his heir. I returned to England rich and not unsuccessful, but Amy had married."

Fred did not break the silence that followed.

"Has the daughter the same fascination?" asked Dr. Gregory.

"I never saw the mother, sir," replied Fred, gently. "I do not know how Amy would strike you. To me she is bewitching beyond all telling."

Dr. Gregory's eyes shone with a moist and tender brightness.

"You must not leave her. Remember my fate, Fred."

"Will you intercede for us with the governor, sir?" said the young man, wistfully.

"Intercede! Don't you know that we have quarrelled, Fred?"

"Quarrelled! What about?" exclaimed Fred, amazed.

"About that!" the antiquarian replied, pointing to the fragment of stone.

"About that!" repeated Fred, putting a glass to his eye and screwing up his face to keep it in place. "What is the matter with it?"

In his heart the young fellow considered all antiquities so much rubbish. He could not understand a craze for broken fragments and old pots.

"Matter with it! It is unique!" cried Dr. Gregory, the antiquarian spirit within him blazing up once more.

"I should think it was, " said Fred, gazing with ferocious interest through his eye-glass at the fragment. "Did the governor dispute its antiquity?"

"Dispute it! he ignored it, Fred! He sees nothing in it!" Dr. Gregory's voice shook.

"Ignored it! why, it is the most extraordinary fragment I ever saw," said Fred heartily.

"It is, Fred, it is! You are a good lad, Fred!"

"Will you intercede for us with my father, sir?" Fred resumed, letting his eyeglass drop, and looking at Dr. Gregory with a new wistfulness. "It is my last chance of winning his consent. If you will not, I must go to Australia."

"Don't do that, Fred, don't do that. I'll think over it. I'll let you know."

When Fred had gone, Dr. Gregory sat doing nothing. The enchanted past was about him, the air was full of its whispered "might have beens." Why had he never married? Why had he never cared for a woman as he cared for this one? A restlessness came over the old man. He had never been able to bring himself to visit the place where she had been, he had avoided it in his thoughts. But now a spell seemed to be drawing him to Manilhurst. Still he shrank from the idea of encountering its golden memories. Then a sudden and wild resolution came over him to go and face these haunting and heart-breaking associations; to go and see the girl who had exercised over Fred the fascination that her mother had exercised over him.

The next afternoon Dr. Gregory was strolling on the old-world streets of Manilhurst. The haunted feeling he had dreaded was over him, it filled him with a mournful ecstasy that was almost akin to joy. He had expected to find everything greatly changed; everything was exactly as he had left it. The very shadows of the trees in the High street seemed the same. He remembered how several times she had walked down the street by his side; he almost fancied he could feel

the draperies of her skirt brushing against his feet. He entered the church; he found the place where she used to sit. He paused before the great colored window behind the altar; he remembered how they had stood and looked at it together. She filled the place; it was alive with her presence. It was the most thrillingly alive place he had visited since he left it twenty-five years before.

He went to the vicarage. The sun was shining on the lattice window that was hers. He turned away; he could not enter the house yet. Later on he returned and summoned up courage to knock. Every one, the servant said, was out except Miss Ancelot. Dr. Gregory sent up his card, and was shown up into the drawing-room. The furniture was not the same he remembered, but there was the bow window where he and she had often sat together. As he stood dreamily looking around him, the door opened and a tall, slight girl, dressed in black, entered. Dr. Gregory stared; she was exactly like her mother—she had the same charming eyes, penetrating, yet caressing.

"Perhaps you do not know my name? I was a friend of your mother," he said with the bluntness of desperation. His heart was beating like a drum.

"Yes, my mother has spoken to me of you, Dr. Gregory, and I am glad to meet you," she replied, holding out her hand.

He took it. "I hope she spoke kindly of me," he said, breathlessly, scarcely knowing what he said.

She smiled, but did not answer. It was her mother's entrancing smile, giving to her face the effect of being passingly seen in sunlight.

He moved away. When he turned, she was looking at him with that searching, sympathetic glance.

"You are very like her," he said.

She shook her head. "She was the most beautiful being, and the best. She was an angel."

"No, she was a woman!" he said.

They looked at each other, and he knew that she understood.

They sat down and they talked of her mother. He gathered from what she said that which he had guessed before, that the marriage had not been a happy one. As he watched her, Dr. Gregory recognized that the daughter was not so beautiful as the mother, but she had the same picturesqueness, and her countenance had more determination. He noted also that the expression of the mobile face when at rest was sad. He mentioned Fred's name. Miss Ancelot became very reserved, and he was sure that she grew a little pale.

"Will you not look upon me as an old friend, my dear?" he said with a pathetic, flurried smile. "I am a pre-historic friend; I hope I may speak frankly to you. Are you not engaged?"

"If Fred mentioned our engagement, it was premature," she replied distantly with a blush.

"Fred is my grandson," explained Dr. Gregory, with anxious insistence; "it was natural that he should speak to me of what was all-important to him."

Still Amy repeated her expression of regret that the engagement had been mentioned.

"There is an obstacle, a great obstacle, my dear," said the old man slowly, putting his hand on hers. "If anything should make you think of parting with Fred, hesitate. In a manner, such partings finish a life. I was parted from your mother."

She rested her bright, pitying eyes upon him for a moment, then all her reserve melted.

"I would not part with Fred if I could help it," she said with a flush and a pallor. "His father has written to me; he disapproves of the engagement. He writes with terrible directness. I cannot express how deeply I am wounded at the tenor of his letter. The large family of daughters he has by his second marriage makes it imperative that Fred should as shortly as possible be independent of his help. He is right in saying that with his son's expensive habits a penniless wife would be an inconceivable hindrance to his career. For Fred's sake I must break off this engagement. I must leave this place."

"Don't let it be a break-off. Whatever you do, don't let it be a break-off," pleaded Dr. Gregory.

"Put yourself in my position," answered the girl, with energy. "What can I do? I cannot, in the face of his father's opposition, keep up the engagement. I have heard of a situation as travelling companion. I shall take it. I must leave Manilhurst. If I did not leave, Fred would never consent to abstain from seeing me."

Dr. Gregory sat in perplexed silence. Loyalty to the friend with whom he had quarrelled kept him dumb. Then he said, as with effort: "If Fred would not consent under the circumstances to submit to the honorable necessity of not calling upon you, I admit you had better leave this place."

"I know that he would not, and I, too," continued Miss Ancelot, with a quaver in her voice, "confess that I am guilty of weakness, perhaps even of doing something very wrong. I am giving Fred a final meeting. I wrote to him that he might come to-day. I think that I hear his step."

She arose and went to the window. Fred's voice sounded outside. "I will not embarrass this meeting," said the old man, rising, "but, I entreat of you, do not let your decision be final. His father may change if circumstances should change."

He took her hand and held it with a tender and lingering clasp. He felt his eyes grow moist; he turned and left the room, softly closing the door after him.

On the stairs he met Fred, looking pale and anxious. "Take courage, lad. Let my fate be a warning to you. Do not lose heart," he whispered.

When Fred entered the room he could not at first see Amy. Then she stepped from behind the curtain, and confronted him in helpless silence for a moment. He put out both his hands and she took them readily. He was about to draw her nearer to him, but she moved away.

"I have something to say, Fred. You will think me cruel, but it is for the best." She spoke with the hoarse note of emotion in her voice.

"What is for the best?" he asked shortly.

"We must break off our engagement," she panted. "Ah!" she went on in a supplicating tone, "your father is right. He has written to me. I know a penniless wife would be a millstone hung about your neck."

"I refuse to release you," said Fred, harshly.

"You cannot act for yourself in this matter. I must act for you, Fred." Her voice was husky. "We must part, dear Fred. We should never be happy with the shadow of his disapproval between us."

"I should be happy with you, whoever disapproved," the young man replied, pale to the lips. Then, with a sudden rage of jealousy, "this is not the reason that you part from me," he cried. "Chisholme is in love with you. I know it. You have walked out twice with him."

"If you think this, so be it," she replied, with a flush. "Let us part."

"No, no, no!" he cried, with a burst of despair.

"Fred," she said gently, "let us trust each other. We may not see each other, but if obstacles can be overcome, we shall overcome them by our constancy."

"I cannot live without seeing you," he cried.

She shook her head without speaking. He looked at her. Something in the expression of her face chilled his heart. He threw himself down on the sofa, hid his face in the cushions, and sobbed. Amy went to him and laid her hand softly on his head. "Your friend, Dr. Gregory, had an intense love for my mother. He loves her still. Let us be like him, Fred, faithful, though apart." With a word and a gentle caress she was gone.

Fred rose; he felt giddy. He wanted to get out into the air. Pulling his hat down over his brows, he strode out into the country. The evening deepened into night; still he tramped on, not caring where he went. When, at last he stopped walking, through sheer fatigue, the dawn was breaking through the sky. He found that he had retraced his steps, and that he was just outside the vicarage garden. The steadfastness of the pale stars

still keeping their watch, the amity of the morning, sank into his heart and spoke to him of patience. He remained leaning against the low wall, gazing up at her window. The village folk early astir looked curiously at him. He went swiftly to the station and caught the first train up to London. A few hours later he was in Dr. Gregory's study.

The old man looked anxiously at him. "Well?" he asked.

"Our engagement is broken off," said Fred, in a voice that had lost all its hopefulness.

"What! are you mad?" cried the old man with a burst of anger. "Do you mean to say that you took the girl at her word? You have allowed your engagement to be broken off finally?"

"It was her wish," answered Fred.

"Her wish," repeated Dr. Gregory with a gesture of despair. "But don't you see what you have done? The girl loves you. Her pride is wounded, and you have allowed a decision, taken in a moment of just resentment, to influence your two lives. You have simply thrown away your chance of happiness—your single chance."

"I know it," said Fred, with a groan. "What could I do?"

"What could you do?" echoed Dr. Gregory. "You should have agreed to part from her for a time, but you should have made her understand that you held the engagement between you as indissoluble. Fool! to have thrown away the peerless chance of happiness that comes but once to a man in his life!" The doctor walked restlessly about his room muttering. "The girl's resolution to remain faithful will grow chill and cold. She will lose her trust in you." Then, pausing in front of Fred, "Go to her at once," he cried.

"Go to her?" repeated Fred, breathlessly. "Do you really advise me to go to her when she has herself sundered the tie between us?"

"Yes, go to her; go to her at once. Tell her you are ready for a while to hold no communication with

her during a period of ordeal. Be ready to keep loyally to that promise, but let there be no breaking off between you."

"Be sure that you are advising me right," said Fred, "for what you counsel I will do."

"Go," repeated Dr. Gregory.

Fred caught the mid-day express. As the train sped along, his hopes, fears, aspirations raged more quickly yet. Would the train never reach the goal where there awaited him the sight of the girl he loved? At Manilhurst he madly tore down the road that led to the vicarage. He pulled furiously at the bell. "Miss Ancelot," he said, as the door opened.

"Miss Ancelot is gone, sir. She left an hour ago," the servant replied.

"Gone!" The shock staggered Fred. "Where is she gone?" he asked.

"We do not know, sir; she left no address with us. The vicar is at home. Would you like to see him?"

Fred was shown into the study. The vicar received him with suave coldness. He confirmed the servant's report. Miss Ancelot had left an hour ago. He was not at liberty to tell where she had gone. He had given his word not to divulge her secret. No entreaties or remonstrances of Fred could persuade the reverend gentleman to throw any light on Miss Ancelot's movements. It was her intention, he understood, to leave England shortly. In conclusion, the Vicar exhorted the young man to submit to his father's wishes and to respect Miss Ancelot's desire to be forgotten. His manner brought an added bitterness to Fred's heart. Toward midnight Dr. Gregory received another visit from Fred.

"She is gone! For God's sake can you tell me where she is?" the young man cried, incoherently

"I can tell you nothing of her," said Dr. Gregory, looking away.

"It cannot be simply because of my father's disapproval that she has left me. I don't believe it," cried Fred.

"Hush! Do not cast a slur upon her," said Dr. Gregory, sternly. "Be brave, be firm," he continued, as the young fellow turned away. "Fred, she has done this for your sake; do not let her have to despise you."

"I shall leave England at once; there is nothing to detain me," said Fred, with a heartsick groan.

The Doctor went to him and laid a hand upon his arm. "Decide nothing for the present. The mystery may clear up, Fred. I am setting off on a journey. Promise to take no important step until I return."

"For the sake of our old friendship," Dr. Gregory pleaded, as Fred did not answer, "promise not to leave England until I return; or, at any rate until the end of the year."

"I promise, if you wish it," said Fred, walking blindly about the room.

During the weeks that followed Fred's life was one continued effort—first, to find her, then to forget her. In both objects he signally failed. Sometimes he thought that the breaking off of his engagement was an illusion—a wild trick of his brain. Sometimes a shapeless torment of jealousy seized him. Temptations to drown his sorrow in forgetfulness beset him, but always the sainted thought of his love restrained him as he hovered on the brink of moral ruin. Once he called on the vicar, but the reverend gentleman had not heard from Miss Ancelot, and had lost all clew to her whereabouts. He wrote to his father, but received no answer. From Dr. Gregory there came no sign. All enjoyment died out of Fred's life. He avoided his friends. Then once more the longing to leave England seized him, to get away from all that reminded him of her. He remembered his promise to wait till the end of the year; but he took his passage for Brisbane on a ship sailing on the 1st of January.

Christmas was passed and the last week of the old year was a few days old when he received a note from Dr. Gregory announcing his return, and asking Fred to come up that evening and have a talk. There was not a word of Miss Ancelot in the note.

"Talk! we have had enough talk, and to spare," thought poor Fred, dejectedly. At the appointed hour, however, he made his way to the doctor's house and entered the study unannounced. On the threshold he paused. Dr. Gregory had another guest. Fred recognized his father, standing with his back to the fire.

"Well, how are you, sir?" said Sir William Fay, without stretching out his hand to his son. An expression of pity softened the sternness of his glance. Fred looked pale and haggard.

Dr. Gregory shook hands with him with radiant fussiness. "You see my old friend and I have made it up," he exclaimed, patting Sir William Fay on the shoulder. The doctor struck Fred as altered; he appeared worn and thin. As Fred glanced from one to the other, a wild hope seized him. It fell under the chilliness of his father's glance.

"I have heard bad reports of you, sir, of the neglect of your work, of your wildness. Take care, you may presume too much on being my only son," said Sir William.

"I shall presume on it no more, sir. I am going out of England in a few days."

"You are going to the dogs, sir, that is where you are going," growled Sir William, deliberately surveying his son through his spectacles.

"Going to the dogs!" repeated Fred bitterly. "I would have gone there sure enough, but for the thought of the girl from whom you parted me."

"Pshaw! she left you of her own free will. She wrote a most sensible letter, sir, an admirable letter. She saw the force of my decision. Forget her as she has forgotten you."

"She has not forgotten me!" cried Fred with energy. "It was her love which impelled her to leave me. She would not drag me down by poverty."

A thousand doubts had rent his heart during those terrible weeks; now they lay dead at his feet as he proclaimed Amy's truth.

"Go in there, sir," commanded Sir William in scath-

ing tones, pointing to the door of another room, "and judge for yourself if she has not forgotten you."

"Yes, yes, judge for yourself," repeated Dr. Gregory, opening the door and pushing Fred inside.

He saw her standing there. She looked appealingly toward him.

"What does it mean?" gasped Fred, putting his hand to his forehead.

"It means," Amy said brokenly, "that if you wish it still, Fred, if you wish it, we can be married."

"If I wish it!" he repeated, and he caught her in his arms.

"Dr. Gregory has done it all! That dear man, for love of my mother, has done it all," she said, as soon as she could speak. "He journeyed all the way to that place in Asia Minor to see your father, to plead with him for us. He fell ill, he nearly died on the way, but he won his consent to our marriage. And, O, Fred! he has adopted me. He has taken me to be his daughter. I am to come to you no longer as a dowerless bride. I shall not hang like a millstone round your neck."

What Fred replied it is needless here to record.

"Well! has she or has she not forgotten you?" inquired Sir William Fay, thrusting his head in through the door. His genial voice was a contrast to the surliness of his former tone.

Walking in, he stretched out his hand. "Come, lad, forgive me," he said. "I did not know you could care for anything so much. Somehow I thought of you as a fop only, Fred."

"To a fop I would not give the girl I love dearly for her own sake, more dearly yet for that of another!" said Dr. Gregory, in a moved voice. He had entered the room behind his friend. Taking Amy's hand, he put it into that of Fred.

Later on, during the evening, Sir William Fay, standing with his back to the fire, suddenly exclaimed: "Gregory, that is a most remarkable fragment, most remarkable! Where did you pick it up?"

"That is the fragment we quarrelled about," said Dr. Gregory.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Sir William, examining the stone more closely with his short-sighted gaze. "Where were my eyes? A most remarkable fragment of undoubted and great antiquity, I should say a fragment almost unique of its kind."

"I knew it. I knew you would think so, Fay, if you would examine it," Dr. Gregory said, tears standing in his eyes as he shook hands with his friend.

A judge who could condemn a thief like "José" must be made of far poorer stuff than the ordinary man. Fortunately, such judges are rare. This touching chronicle of the affection of an intelligent brute is translated from the French of Jacques Morand for ROMANCE by Anna K. Almy.

THE STORY OF RIQUET.

LAST year I spent a few days with a friend, who is judge of the court at A——, in the lovely country of Provence. We were breakfasting, and I was retailing the gay doings of Paris, when a servant entered and gave my host a very thick letter.

"Pardon me," said my friend, "I see this comes from the prison and I must read it at once."

When he had finished, he seemed quite depressed, for one who had seen many human beings sentenced to death without showing the least emotion.

"Read it," he said, passing me the large missive.

Here are the contents:

YOUR HONOR:—My trial is set for to-morrow. I have endeavored to explain my case to the young lawyer who defends me, but from his manner I think my history only amuses him. I am afraid to speak of it to you, and for that reason I write. Pardon the liberty. Believe me, sir, I am an honest man and not a *genuine thief*.

I have not always been the poor wretch I am now. In times past I was quite well off. I was by no means the richest man in Sorgas when I married Dilonne, but I was certainly the one most in love. She was so pretty! More than one gentleman envied me on our wedding-day. We were very happy. Every evening when I came home, tired with the day's work, just to see her smile seemed to rest me. A little girl, beautiful as the angels, came to crown our happiness. Employment was not lacking, and I worked with a good

will. I fear my letter will be very long, but I must give you all the details.

By and by, finding ourselves better off, Dilonne confided to me her ambition. She wanted to own a donkey. She sold butter and eggs in the town, and the distance was long on foot. "With a donkey," she said, "I can easily go to market and take Solange with me." We laid aside six five-franc pieces for the purchase of our little beast, and one beautiful Spring morning we started at five o'clock to be first on the field at the County Fair. We walked along gayly under the fresh green foliage, and I can still recall how merrily the money clinked in my pocket. After walking for an hour and a half, we arrived at the grounds. We had taken turns carrying little Solange. She was four years old and solid on her tiny feet, but not able to walk such a distance.

There were at least thirty donkeys for sale. I chose one, but Dilonne said it had a wicked look. At last, by careful search, we found a very small one. He was young, and had a playful little air as he pawed the ground impatiently with his small hoofs. He had handsome dark eyes, and wagged his long ears at every sound. We knew he must be gentle, for, Solange having slipped away to get nearer to him, he patiently allowed her to pat him.

The owner, seeing that the beast suited us, asked forty francs for him. I offered twenty-five. After an hour spent in bargaining, we agreed upon thirty. Toward evening we started for home, the good little animal following us very willingly with Solange on his back. The installation of our new possession was quite an affair, but he appeared to appreciate it all, for from that time I think he really loved us. We named him "Riquet." Every morning at breakfast time he used to come for his bit of bread to the window; his pretty head framed in sweet peas and morning glories, he would rub our hands gently with his nose to express his thanks.

Just as we had planned, twice a week Dilonne went

to town with her butter, eggs, and fresh vegetables in one basket, and Solange in the other for a counter-balance. I could watch them from a long distance as they approached our home, always a little tired.

But there came a day, after three years of continued happiness, when Dilonne could not leave her bed. My poor darling! She had the typhoid fever. Doctors came from town. They cut off her beautiful black hair; they put ice on her head; but nothing could save her. She died while attempting to sing a little song. I could have wished to die also, all was so changed for me,—but Solange was left. She was growing very fast, and looked exactly like her mother.

On Sundays we two, Solange and I, would go to the cemetery which surrounded our little church, and stay there by the grave until afternoon, when we used to take a walk, the little one mounted on Riquet. Thus we would ramble on for a long distance, gathering great bunches of grass for the donkey's supper.

One afternoon—it was during the olive harvest—there were signs of a storm, and the master made us work until daybreak to finish the picking. I could not go home that day or the next, but the following evening I started, happy in the thought of once more seeing Solange. To my great surprise, she did not come to meet me, and on getting nearer our cottage I could see no light in the windows. Trembling with fear, I entered the house. I saw my cherished little girl, lying on the bed all dressed. The door was open, and Riquet stood at the sill watching her, but only his head was stretched into the room. She was in a burning fever, having caught cold the night before, while watching so late for me to come.

Forgive me, your honor, for telling you all my troubles; but when I saw the poor child so ill, I nearly lost my senses. The fever never left her. She had a thousand fancies. Sometimes she grew pale as the moonlight, her great eyes shining very brightly. Riquet was the only friend who could make her smile. She often had a hard cough, which exhausted her com-

pletely and brought two brilliant red spots to her cheeks. She grew weaker and weaker. Nothing seemed to give her any strength. The doctor said very little, but ordered medicines which cost much money. I could no longer work. I stayed all day by the side of my little invalid. Soon she could not leave her bed, and then she had many fantastic wishes; she longed for expensive fruit, for toys and flowers. I had no money, and not knowing what to do, I was forced to borrow. How could I refuse my darling?

A neighbor lent me the money, for which he made me sign a note. I would have signed away my hope of a place in Paradise to make Solange happy, to watch her smile, or see a ray of returning health. One afternoon in Spring she said to me in the little coaxing voice which I could never resist, "Dear father, I feel well! I want to see the flowers. Will you bring Riquet and put me on him and take me out a little way?"

I wrapped her up warmly. She was as light as a feather. Riquet seemed pleased enough when he felt this tiny burden, and held his ears erect as if to show his good intentions. Solange cried out with joy, she was so glad to be in the fresh air and bright sunshine. Her small hands, which were almost transparent, scarcely held the reins, but Riquet stopped of his own accord at all the best places for her to gather wild roses and sprigs of the hawthorn, which shed its white petals like snow on my little darling.

"Oh, it is so nice here! is it not, papa?" As the poor child said this, her head dropped. She had a sort of convulsion and fell back on my arm which was about her. She was dead.

The doctor told me he had expected it. They took her from me and I was alone.

As I had not paid back the money I borrowed, and had signed a note for it, they came to my house and seized everything. The sheriff looked into all the closets, fumbled in the bureau-drawers, went from cellar to attic and out to the stable, and finally on All Saints' day they held the sale. The auctioneer stood

on our large table. From a distance I could see him take each article in his hand and hold it up to view,—our china and glass, the clock, my clothes, the baby's cradle—everything was sold. Hidden in a little vine-covered arbor, I watched it all, and I felt my heart breaking as one thing after another went under the hammer. Finally, raising his voice, the auctioneer said, "There is also a young donkey good for work. Is there a buyer at forty francs?"

No one spoke.

"At thirty?"

Not a word.

"Twenty-five?"

Then he said, "Gentlemen, he is worth more than that."

They went to fetch Riquet. He came very slowly, pricking up his long ears, and looking defiance from his eyes. He seemed to realize that he was to be sold, and that for him also happiness was at an end.

"This donkey is offered for fifteen francs, gentlemen!"

"Twenty!" said one.

"Twenty-one!" said another.

"No one bids higher? Gone!" and a burly, red-haired, red-faced farmer claimed him.

Poor Riquet, who had always been so gentle, tried to kick, but his new master struck him with a heavy stick, and dragged him away. I suppose it was very foolish, your honor, but when I saw that, I ran off sobbing.

I had to live, so I went to a farmer in the neighborhood, who hired me by the day. I worked like a brute, and that tired me so completely that it kept me from thinking of my grief. At night I slept soundly, but the awakening was terrible, as I realized more and more each day my burden of sorrow.

At the end of a year, the farmer's daughter was married, and there was a grand *fête* at the house; but the sound of the wedding music was a death-knell in my heart. I felt that I must get away from it all.

Quite alone, I walked across the country, and, in

spite of myself, I took the road to Sorgas. I swear to you, sir, I had no evil intention in my mind. I went along in a half-dazed manner, feeling that I had grown very old. Life is hard for the poor. Finding myself near the cemetery, I thought I would visit the graves of my wife and child. Not wishing to be recognized, I took a short cut across the fields. The corn-harvest was over, and as I walked, I heard the stubble creaking under my feet. All at once, on the other side of a ditch, I saw a donkey and heard a loud and prolonged bray. Coming closer, I saw it was Riquet, who had recognized me. He stretched his neck as far as his cord permitted, and looked at me with his beautiful eyes wide open. He stopped cropping the grass, and when I was near enough, he took my coat very gently between his teeth and shook his head several times. I caressed him, and sat down to look him well over. I found him much abused. On his back were sores made by wearing too heavy a saddle. His legs were covered with bloody scratches, and his coat, formerly so glossy, was now all rough and rusty. Poor Riquet! He laid his pretty head on my knees, at the same time looking behind me to see if by chance I had a morsel of bread hidden away for him,—an old trick of his. It was the meeting of old friends after a long absence, but as evening approached, we were forced to part. Taking Riquet by the head, I said good-bye, turning back once for a farewell look. I had scarcely gone a hundred steps when I felt a knock on my back. It was poor Riquet. He had broken his halter to follow me. I swear to it, your honor, I meant to take him back and tie him securely, but while I was leading him, he looked at me so sadly that I fairly lost my strength. I saw, as in a dream, the happy morning when Dilonne and I set out to buy our donkey, taking with us little Solange.

"Do not leave me, I am so unhappy," his large, plaintive eyes seemed to say, and his look of misery filled me with pity. Then I was seized with a sudden folly, and I said to him, with a peculiar little clicking

noise, that he knew well, "Come!" Still holding him by the halter with my hands, we started and ran like veritable thieves. We both seemed to have renewed our youth. I ran, thinking only that I had regained a little of my lost happiness. I do not know how far we had gone when I heard a voice calling after me.

Instead of stopping, I ran all the faster, Riquet leading and fairly dragging me after him. It was a wild chase, the earth fairly flying from under our feet! I was breathless, but could still hear the voice behind us carried on the wind. The blood was ringing in my ears, and my breath stopped in my throat. Suddenly I felt a heavy hand grasp my shoulder and a coarse voice said, "Thief!" It was all that the man could say, for he, too, was at the end of his strength. At last he regained his breath, and as we were nearing a village, he made an effort to call to some men, who were drinking and laughing at a tavern. He still held me by my collar, but had taken the halter out of my hand. Riquet no longer led the way. He was hauled along, and had a tricky look in his eye. The men answered the call, and as the grasp which was choking me relaxed, I recognized the man who had bought Riquet.

Two officers prevented my escape. A crowd collected, and I had nothing to say in self-defence. The farmer told of my wild flight, which, of course, aggravated the offence. Your honor, I assure you Riquet seemed to comprehend it all! They put me in prison, and my donkey in the pound to await the trial. I only ask of you to give orders that Riquet shall be well cared for. This is the whole story. I have told it truthfully; I am here because I am guilty. In fact, we are both of us guilty. But I still maintain I am not a *genuine thief*.

Respectfully your servant,

José.

"I shall not leave until after this trial," I said to my friend. "I wish to hear your judgment in the case of this poor fellow."

"There is something better than that, which you can

do," he replied. "I am not at liberty to do it, but you can find this farmer who claims the donkey. If you pay him the price of the donkey and a small sum in addition, that will end it all."

No sooner said than done! For one hundred francs I could have the little animal then and there, and the man was only too glad to withdraw the complaint.

We returned Riquet to his first master. One looked as happy as the other. I have since seen them living peacefully together, going from village to village selling small wares. True friends are rare.

"Dominic," in the following anonymous story, is not the first man who has unexpectedly found his good offices substantially rewarded. Here is an account of a "waiter's fee" which was worth having.

DOMINIC'S FEE.

Among the persons who were in the habit of regularly frequenting the well-known Café de Foy in the Palais Royal, about the year 1815, was a little old man, very carefully dressed, although his costume constituted a real anachronism. His head was enveloped in a warm Welsh wig, with a long, thick queue depending from it, which appeared, when viewed from behind, to resemble a full-grown cabbage, with the stem still dangling from its circumference. His pantaloons were of black cloth, and were met midway down his stumpy legs by long Hessian boots, garnished with tassels, and bright as the surface of a polished mirror; a long green waistcoat fell downward in folds so as to cover in part a round and well-developed paunch; a loose and capacious coat, of a deep maroon color, decorated with large bright metal buttons, and forcibly reminding one of the era of the Republic, hung over the shoulders; and a hat, beveled off into a sugar-loaf form, surmounted the wig, and completed his equipment.

After all, however, this costume was nothing very extraordinary, or indeed very different from that of the hundreds of antiquated men who about this epoch were to be seen swarming forth in fine weather, like a host of innocent green frogs basking in the sun after a spring shower. The little old man in question visited the Café de Foy every morning precisely at one o'clock, called for a cup of coffee with cream, and a roll of bread, which he always divided into the same number of circular slices. It was necessary, however, that this bread should be stale, and as they knew the peculiar fancy of the old gentleman in this respect, a roll was carefully

reserved from each day's consumption, and put aside for his breakfast the following morning. From this practice the old gentleman became known among the different waiters by the sobriquet of "the man who always ate stale bread."

The old gentleman's state of existence was so uniform, and his movements so regular, as to resemble, in no small degree, those of an automaton. He entered the café every morning without looking to the right or the left, and proceeded directly to a little round table, isolated and small, and for these reasons, nearly always unoccupied. After being served with his breakfast, he invariably abstracted two out of the five pieces of sugar which lay beside his cup, and conveyed them into the dexter pocket of his green waistcoat; he next proceeded to butter in succession each of the numerous morsels of bread, adding, if I mistake not, precisely the same number of grains of salt to each, and then ate his breakfast, cautiously abstaining from looking at any of the journals or periodicals.

Some of the ardent politicians who frequented the place expressed astonishment and contempt at this last habit, and regarded the little old man as a very vandal, careless of the honor and interests of his country. The more judicious, and among them myself, were of a different opinion; we considered him, for precisely the same reasons, a very paragon of prudence and wisdom. Inattentive to both parties, "the man who always ate stale bread" pursued the quiet tenor of his way without change. He never attempted to form any intimacies, or suffered any unnecessary expressions to escape from his lips; his breakfast was eaten in silence, and usually terminated with the *finale* of a march beaten with his fingers on the table. His next step consisted in pulling up the Hessian boots to their greatest altitude, after which he paid for his breakfast, gave the waiter his fee, and left the house without saluting the *dame de comptoir*.

The worthy old gentleman's habits and peculiarities excited so much attention among the customers and waiters at the coffee-house, and his manners were so

gentle and docile, that some of the younger people began to think he would prove an eligible butt for their pleasantries. A sub-lieutenant on half-pay, and in want of cheap amusement, determined one day to forestall the old gentleman in his accustomed seat, and take possession of the table to which he was attached. The little man arrived, and without being disconcerted took his place on the opposite side.

"There is no room here for two," said the young fire-eater, twirling his mustache.

"I have used this table for months," replied the old man, without moving, and in a deprecating tone of voice.

The soldier could not resist the appeal, and retreated from the field. This occurrence encouraged one of the waiters to make a further trial of his equanimity. The little old man being unwilling, as I have said, to waste words, was in the habit of holding up his forefinger to intimate the *quantum sufficit* of coffee and of cream. The waiter, pretending inadvertence, directed the stream of boiling coffee over the finger of the old man, at the instant that he waved it forth as a signal to cease pouring. The sufferer rose silently from his seat, and, with an alacrity for which no one gave him credit, brought the point of his stout Hessian boot in contact with that part of the person of the waiter which was uncovered with coat-tails, and sent the joker spinning across the floor of the apartment.

The waiter was exiled from the coffee-room as a punishment for the attack; the justice of the master condemned him to serve for a certain space in the laboratory, as the kitchen of the *café-restaurant* is called.

In the end, "the man who always ate stale bread" triumphed over his tormentors, and generally had the laughter on his own side. He did not, however, exhibit any appearance of triumph; and after one or two additional attempts at mystification, finding him quite immovable, his enemies left him to enjoy in peace his little table at the Café de Foy.

One day, toward the close of the year 1817, the old

man quitted the *café* without paying for his breakfast; but as he made no observation in so doing, it was supposed that he had forgotten it, and would remember it the next morning. The coffee-house keeper, however, reckoned without his host in this supposition, for the next day, and the next, and the next, "the man who always ate stale bread" regularly pocketed his two lumps of sugar, beat his accustomed march, pulled up his Hessian boots, and did all that he had been accustomed to do, with the exception of paying his bill.

This change in his usual practice continued for a week, at the end of which time the proprietor of the coffee-house, ignorant of the name or residence of his debtor, determined upon presenting him with a bill, the more especially as the little man gave no explanation of his conduct, or made any allusion to this remarkable change in his ancient habits.

Dominic, the chief waiter of the establishment, had become attached to the old man in consequence of the little trouble he gave and his quiet and gentle demeanor. Dominic imagined, from the circumstance of his not diminishing the expense of his breakfast, that the good man was merely laboring under some temporary embarrassment; so that, partly from calculation and partly from good feeling, Dominic determined to become responsible to the proprietor for the past and future breakfasts, not doubting that the embarrassment would shortly cease, and that the little man would soon settle his arrears, and perhaps accompany the settlement with a gratuity for the accommodation.

But Dominic was deceived in his calculation of time; ten months elapsed without any allusion to the matter, or offer of payment. The coffee-house keeper and his waiters began to shrug their shoulders and make long faces at the risk poor Dominic was running. Dominic himself, exposed to these daily doubts, began to think that he had acted too liberally in becoming responsible for a man whose debt seemed destined to go on accruing forever, when one day the old man, without any explanation, demanded his account, settled it in full, and

after a careful calculation handed to the waiter, in addition, the sum of fifteen francs six sous as his gratuity, at the rate of one sou a day for ten months, of which four contained each thirty-one days.

If interest alone had guided the conduct of the head waiter, it must be confessed that he had lamentably failed in the result, for in France the contributions to the waiters are all placed in one general cash-box, and at the end of a certain period the proceeds are divided among all the servants of the house—the master first helping himself to the lion's share; at this rate, therefore, Dominic's recompense would probably amount to a solitary sixpence. Dominic knew this, but was satisfied with the reward of his own heart; he thanked the old man graciously for the payment, placed the gratuity in the common receptacle, and transferred the other moneys to his own stronghold, for he had previously paid, day by day, the expense of the breakfast from his own pocket.

The little man followed Dominic's movements with his eyes, at the same time beating upon the table a march, somewhat longer and a little more vehement than was his wont; but by no word or movement did he afford an indication of having understood the liberal conduct of the waiter in his behalf.

About the close of the same year—that is to say, three or four months after the liquidation of this singular debt—the proprietor of the *café*, who had amassed a fortune, announced his intention of disposing of the establishment and retiring from trade.

Hearing this intention announced in the *café*, the old gentleman made a sign to Dominic, who was in attendance, to approach, and began a conversation. Dominic was as much surprised at this sudden fit of loquacity as though one of the stucco figures on the ceiling had opened its mouth and had asked for a cup of coffee. But Dominic was destined to be even more surprised at the nature of the conversation.

"My friend," said the little old gentleman to the head waiter, "you are a good fellow, and I wish you well."

Dominic bowed, and elevated his shoulders with that slight movement which may be interpreted *ad libitum* to mean, "I am much obliged," or "It is of little consequence to me." The old man took the former explanation, and continued—

"Dominic, I am sure you have been economical; I know this and much more of which I do not speak, because I am too well acquainted with the value of words to throw them away—I know you have saved money."

Dominic bounded back a step or two, and the action hardly needed to be interpreted. "He is about to ask me to lend him money," thought the head waiter.

The questioner appeared to divine the thoughts of the waiter; his visage was for an instant distorted with a grimace, of which the model may be seen in the figures of the middle ages which decorate the porch of some Gothic church.

"Dominic," he continued, "I see that I am right—you have money in the funds. This is excellent; and now to reply to my question shortly and to the purpose. Do you think, from your own knowledge, that an intelligent man, desirous of improving his circumstances, would find this a favorable speculation in which to risk a capital so large as that demanded by your master for his business?"

Dominic was pleased to have an opportunity of talking on a subject which entirely occupied his thoughts. "If," said he, "the purchaser understood the business so as to be able to attend to his own interests, and if he were not compelled to borrow the purchase-money on extravagant terms, he would find the business a fortune."

"Well, and why do you not purchase it?"

"Mercy, I! with what?"

"With your savings."

"My savings! they do not altogether amount to ten thousand francs."

"Ten thousand francs! how long have you been in service, Dominic?"

"I have carried the napkin for twenty-three years. I am now thirty-nine."

"You are a good fellow, as I said: the man who could amass ten thousand francs by adding sou to sou would soon be worth a million at the head of a house like this. Decidedly, it must be so. Dominic, I know a person who could assist you with a loan; how much do you want?"

"Nothing. I would not incur a debt of two hundred and twenty thousand francs—the risk is too great, and the interest would probably absorb all the profit. I would rather continue a waiter a few years longer, and retire upon a small annuity, than run the risk of marching to prison in the shoes of a bankrupt."

"You speak sense, my friend, but leave the matter to me."

The old man then adjusted the folds of his boots, and departed without uttering another word. The next morning he came to the *café* half an hour earlier than was his custom. Dominic commenced arranging his table, but the old man arrested his arm.

"Where is the proprietor?" said he.

"In his cabinet," said Dominic.

"Conduct me to him."

Dominic moved forward to show the man the way; his heart beat with violence. Although he had passed the whole of the preceding day in trying to convince himself that the good man was weak in his intellect, and was trifling with him, still his perplexity returned when he beheld the air of assurance and determination with which "the man who ate stale bread" proceeded about the business. When they were both arrived in the presence of the proprietor, the old man commenced the conversation without further preamble.

"How much do you demand for your establishment?" said he.

"Before I reply to your inquiry," said the proprietor, who suspected some mystification or scene of folly; "before I reply to your demand, and enter upon the affair with you, suffer me to ask whom I have the honor to address?"

"You are right. If two parties are about to enter

into a contract, it is first of all necessary that they should know and have confidence in each other. I am the Baron Ragelet, ex-commissary-general of the armies of the empire."

"Baron Ragelet!" said the proprietor, bowing. "I know the name; I have seen it lately in the newspapers."

"No doubt—in relation to an injunction obtained by my indignant family to prevent me from wasting my fortune. They say that I am a fool, and that my liberality has its origin in imbecility. During ten months, while the inquiry was going on, my property was estreated, and I refused to touch the allowance offered me. Since then the inquiry has terminated in favor of my sanity, and having again entered upon the administration of my property, I was enabled to refund to this excellent man the little sum he had the generosity to disburse for me. Now that we know each other, let us return to business. What sum do you demand for your establishment?"

"Two hundred and twenty thousand francs."

"It is not, perhaps, too dear; and yet you would probably have no objection to leave some of the purchase-money on mortgage. But listen to me. The times are unsettled, and the most solid establishments are at the mercy of revolutions, and two hundred thousand francs now are better than two hundred and twenty thousand in prospective. Here, then," he continued, drawing an old portfolio from his pocket, "is two hundred thousand francs in notes of the Bank of France. If these satisfy you, the affair is finished. This is my way of transacting business, and in my time I have completed more important bargains in fewer words."

Dominic and his master both seemed stupefied with surprise. The baron appeared to enjoy their confusion, and rubbed his hands and repeated the grimace to which we have alluded.

"I am willing to agree," said the proprietor; "but it is necessary that the matter should be arranged by a notary."

"Why so? Is not the sale executed in good form by the three parties present?"

"But with respect to the interest," murmured Dominic, in a smothered tone of voice, seizing the baron's coat, "it is necessary——"

"Bah!" replied the old man, "I do it to oblige a friend, and am no usurer. Give me your acknowledgment—I desire nothing else. But as I have no intention of making you a present of two hundred thousand francs, I will arrange it in such a manner that you shall not long remain my debtor."

Dominic fell from his elevation, and "the man who always ate stale bread" descended to the coffee-room. While the buyer and seller were preparing themselves to register the transfer of the property, he swallowed tranquilly his cup of coffee, without forgetting the two pieces of sugar to be transferred to his pocket, beat a superb march on the table, drew up his boots, and departed with his two friends to finish, by a dash of the pen, a transfer of the two hundred thousand francs.

In a few days Dominic was installed in his new dignity. The little old man continued to take his customary breakfast in his usual impassive manner, when, one day, as he was leaving the room, he deviated so far from his usual custom as to approach Dominic, who was enthroned in the seat of honor, and address him with the following words:

"Dominic," said he, "I think you have warm affections."

"Perhaps," said Dominic, fixing his eyes upon the baron, as though he would read his thoughts.

"I see," said the other; "you have them when the occasion demands it. You are right—I am pleased with the reservation. I find you have not lost your heart. Marriage is the most important affair of a man's life. Dominic, you must get married."

"I have already thought of it, sir," said Dominic; "a wife would be a great source of comfort and economy—it would save the expense of a *dame de comptoir*."

"True," said the baron; "you have need of aid and

counsel—you shall have them. Be ready at eight o'clock this evening; I will call for you, and we will pay a visit together."

The appointed hour arrived, and with it the baron. Dominic was ready and accompanied Monsieur Ragelet in a hackney-coach to that quarter of decayed wealth—the Faubourg St. Germain. Here they stopped at the door of a house of mean appearance, and having ascended several flights of stairs, entered a small apartment, where they found two ladies, who received them with marked attention.

"Madame Dupré," said the baron to one of them, with an appearance of friendly familiarity, "this is the worthy man of whom I have spoken, and in whose welfare I hope to interest you. Dominic," continued he, turning toward the coffee-house keeper, "this lady is the widow of a man who has rendered me many an important service. She has promised to extend her favors to you, and will permit you to visit her at intervals."

While Monsieur Ragelet was making these introductions in due form, the daughter of Madame Dupré, whose name was Rose, and who, without being exactly beautiful, possessed all the freshness and bloom of the flower whose name she bore, regarded Dominic attentively, and he in return bestowed upon her a large share of his attention. The result of this double investigation appeared favorable to both parties, for Dominic was well-formed, and with good features, and his countenance reflected the goodness and gentleness of his heart. He had also taken care at his first introduction to set off his person to the best advantage, believing the old adage, that, with the ladies, *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.*

But the meanness of the apartment, and the simple and inexpensive dresses of the ladies, somewhat disappointed Dominic. He was anxious at the earliest possible moment to return the baron's loan, and indeed thought, from a hint the baron had dropped, that it was his intention to introduce him to a lady of property, who could do something toward the liquidation of his

debt. The next day, as the interview had been satisfactory between the young people, the baron announced to Dominic his plans in full. He stated the nature of the services done him by the elder Dupré, and his desire, as the family were left in reduced circumstances, to discharge the obligation without alarming their delicacy; and this, he thought, he could best do by effecting a marriage between Dominic and the daughter of his friend.

Dominic was satisfied with this explanation and arrangement: the young lady appeared truly amiable, and desirable as a partner for life; and before a week had elapsed Dominic made a formal offer of his hand and heart, which was duly accepted.

The marriage was soon after solemnized, and the same day, after his customary breakfast, the baron beckoned to Dominic to approach.

"You have done well," said he; "you have married, without interested motives, a woman desirous and capable of rendering you happy. I told you I should find the means to cancel the debt you owe me; it is the dowry of Rose. And here," continued he, tearing the two hundred thousand franc bill in pieces, "I destroy the acknowledgment you gave for the money. Enjoy it, and be happy."

Dominic, full of gratitude, would have thrown himself at the baron's feet, but he was already out of the door. "Two or three such acts," he muttered to himself as he walked swiftly away, "and I shall die contented; and these are what my relations call prodigal dilapidations of my fortune."

Dominic verified the prediction of the baron, and became a millionaire. He improved the establishment in the Palais Royal, and, having brought it to its present state of perfection, sold the property for five hundred thousand francs. He is now a retired citizen, residing in a noble hotel in the Rue St. Honoré, distinguished chiefly for the simple probity of his character. Rose and he have never forgotten nor hesitated to acknowledge their obligations to "the man who always ate stale bread."

No exhibition founded upon the most approved Delsartean principles could possibly mirror more vividly the most awful emotion known to the human soul than does this clear-cut sketch by Guy de Maupassant. It is translated for ROMANCE by Annie W. Ayer.

FEAR.

"Guy de Maupassant has fallen a victim to the intensity of his emotions. Long before the dreadful affliction fell upon him he described and analyzed insanity. In this sketch, written some ten years ago, he depicts fear, which is a nervous disorder and also a species of mental disease. The description is perhaps one of the best and most intense ever written by the author of 'Horla.' "—FIGARO.

WE went up on the bridge after dinner. The Mediterranean lay before us without a ripple, silvered by a great, peaceful moon. The steamer glided along, leaving a serpentine trail of black smoke against the sky, which was studded with stars. Behind us, the water, white from the working of the screw, foamed and writhed, stirring up so many phosphorescent lights that it seemed like molten silver.

There were six or eight of us, all silent and wondering, our eyes turned toward the distant shores of Africa, whither we were speeding.

The captain, who was smoking with us, suddenly resumed the conversation we had been having at dinner.

"Yes, that day I was afraid. My ship remained six hours with that rock in her vitals—lashed by the sea. Fortunately, we were picked up toward night by an English coaler who had sighted us."

A tall, sunburnt man with a grave face now spoke for the first time. He was one of those men who, as one knows instinctively, has penetrated into unknown lands through countless dangers, whose calm eyes seem to carry in their depths something of the strange sights they have seen, and to whom fear seems an impossibility.

"You say, captain, that you were afraid. I don't believe it. You are mistaken in the word and in the sensation which you experienced. An active man is never afraid in the face of urgent danger. He may be disturbed, agitated, anxious,—but *fear*—that is another thing."

The captain replied laughingly:

"The deuce! I'll answer for it, I was afraid!"

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Then the man with the sunburnt face began slowly:

"Permit me to explain myself: Fear (and the most courageous man can be afraid) is something horrible—a frightful sensation like the rending of a soul—a fearful spasm of brain and heart—the very thought of which makes one shudder with anguish. But that never comes either before attack or before certain death, or before any known form of danger; it comes only under certain abnormal conditions, certain mysterious influences, in the face of some intangible peril. Real fear is something like the recollection of fantastic terrors of long ago. A man who believes in ghosts, and imagines he sees a spectre in the night, realizes the full horror of fear. As for me, I have known fear in broad daylight. It was some ten years ago. I also felt its effects last winter on a December night. And yet I have passed through many dangers, many adventures, which threatened to prove fatal. I have fought many battles; I have been left for dead by robbers; I have been condemned to be hanged as a rebel in America, and thrown overboard on the coast of China. Each time I supposed I was lost, and resigned myself to my fate without emotion, and even without regret.

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"But that is not fear.

"It first came to me in Africa. And yet it is a native of the North. Sun dissipates it like a mist. Remember this, gentlemen. Among the Orientals life counts for nothing. They accept death without a pang. The nights are clear and devoid of mystery. The Eastern soul know not those dark fears which haunt the brain

in colder lands. In the East, panic is possible, but fear is unknown.

"Well, then, here is what happened to me in this land of Africa:

"I was crossing the great dunes in the south of Ourgla. It is the strangest land in the world. You know the compact, interminable sands of the seashore? Very well; imagine the ocean itself become sand in the midst of a hurricane. Imagine a silent tempest of motionless waves of yellow dust. They are high as mountains,—these unequal waves, different, upheaving exactly like unchained billows, but larger, and streaked like quartz.

"On this furious sea, mute, and without motion, the southern sun pours its direct and pitiless rays. One must climb these waves of golden sand, descend, and climb again incessantly, without rest and without shelter. The horses sink up to their knees going down these appalling hills.

. . . . . .

"There were two of us, followed by eight 'spahis' and four camels with their drivers. We had ceased speaking, overcome with heat and fatigue and parched with thirst like the burning desert. Suddenly one of the men uttered an inarticulate cry. All stopped short and stood immovable, overtaken by an inexplicable phenomenon known to travellers in these lost countries.

"From somewhere near us, though we could see nothing, came the sound of the beating of a drum—the mysterious drum of the dunes. It sounded distinctly—sometimes loudly—then more faintly—stopping, and then resuming its fantastic beating. The Arabs looked at one another, and one of them said in his native tongue: 'Death is upon us.' Just then my companion, my friend, almost my brother, dropped from his horse. His head fell forward. He was sun-struck.

"For two hours, while I tried to save him, this phantom drum filled my ears with its monotonous beating, intermittent and incomprehensible. It was then that I felt, creeping into my bones, fear—hideous fear—by

the side of that loved body, in this burning hole set on fire by the sun, shut in by four walls of sand, while the unknown echo flung back to us—a hundred leagues from any French settlement—the rapid beating of a drum.

"That day I understood what fear meant, but I understood still better another time."

The captain interrupted:

"Excuse me, but this drum, what was it?"

The traveller answered:

"I do not know. No one knows. The French officers, who have been surprised by it, attribute it generally to the echo — immeasurably multiplied by the undulations of the dunes—of showers of sand carried by the wind and striking against tufts of dried weeds. For this phenomenon has always occurred in the vicinity of small plants withered by the sun and hard as parchment. This drum was nothing but a mirage of sound. That is all. But I did not know that until later.

"Now I come to my second experience.

. . . . . .

"It was last winter in a forest in the northeastern part of France. Night came on two hours earlier than usual, for the sky was so overcast. My guide, a peasant, walked by my side in the narrow path under an arch of pines through which the riotous wind howled and shrieked. Through the tops of the trees I could see the scurrying clouds — distracted clouds which seemed to be flying before some horror. At times the whole forest bent before a fearful gust, with a wail of suffering, and the cold penetrated to my very marrow, in spite of my rapid gait and heavy clothing.

"We were to eat and sleep at a forester's, whose cottage was not far off. The guide lifted his eyes now and then and muttered, 'A wild night.' Then he began to tell me about the people who were to give us shelter. The father had killed a poacher, two years before, and since that time he had been morose and gloomy, and seemed to be haunted by some fearful memory. His two married sons lived with him.

"The darkness was profound. I could see nothing be-

fore me nor around me. The clashing branches of the trees filled the night with an unceasing uproar. At last, I caught the glimmer of a light, and soon my companion was knocking at a door. We were answered by the piercing shrieks of women. Then a man's voice, a choked voice, demanded, 'Who is there?' The guide gave his name. We entered. The scene that met our eyes was strange past belief.

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"An old, white-haired man with wild eyes, and with a loaded gun in his hand, awaited us. He was standing in the middle of the kitchen, while two strapping fellows, armed with hatchets, guarded the door.

"I could make out in the dark corners of the room two women on their knees, their faces hidden against the wall.

"Explanations were made. The old man put down his gun, and gave orders to prepare my room: then, as the women did not stir, he said brusquely to me: 'You see, monsieur, I killed a man two years ago to-night. Last year he came back to haunt me. I am waiting for him to-night.' Then he added, in a tone which made me smile: 'So you see we are somewhat uneasy.'

"I reassured him as best I could, glad to have come that night and to witness this strange spectacle of superstitious terror. I told stories and succeeded in calming them all.

"Near the hearth an old dog, blind and feeble,—one of those dogs which remind one of people one has known,—slept with his nose between his paws.

"Outside, the furious storm beat against the house. Through a narrow pane, a sort of peep-hole near the door, I could see, by the vivid flashes of lightning, a confusion of trees lashed by the wind.

"In spite of my efforts, I could feel that a profound terror had possession of these people, and whenever I ceased speaking, every ear was strained to catch some distant sound. Tired of watching their absurd fears, I was about to ask to be shown to my room, when the old forester sprang from his chair and seized his gun.

"'There he comes! There he comes! I hear him!' he gasped wildly.

"The two women fell on their knees again, and the sons snatched up their axes. I was trying to quiet them, when the sleeping dog suddenly awoke, and lifting his head, his neck extended, and looking into the fire with his sightless eyes, he gave vent to one of those unearthly howls which make belated travellers tremble as they hurry homeward alone in the dark. All eyes turned toward him. He now stood erect and motionless, as if troubled by a vision, and commenced to howl again at something invisible, unknown—frightful without doubt, for his coat bristled. The forester was ghastly pale.

"'He scents him! He scents him!' he cried. 'He was there when I killed him.' And the two women, half-crazed, joined their cries with the dog's.

"In spite of myself, a shiver ran down my back. The sight of this dog, in this place, at this hour, in the midst of these distracted people, was horrible.

"Then, for a whole hour the dog howled without stirring; he howled as if in the agonies of a nightmare, and fear, horrid fear, entered into my soul. Fear of what? Can I tell? It was fear; that is all.

"We remained pale and immovable, with strained ears and beating hearts—terrified at the least sound—waiting for some fearful apparition. The dog began to walk around the room, sniffing at the walls and moaning continually. The beast would drive us mad! At last, the peasant who had brought me threw himself upon the brute in a paroxysm of furious terror, and, opening the door into a small court, flung the animal out.

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"The dog was quiet immediately, and we remained plunged in a silence still more appalling. Suddenly we all started at the same instant. A creature glided against the wall outside, toward the forest, and then passed close by the door, which it seemed to try with a hesitating hand. Nothing more was heard for a few moments. We nearly went mad with suspense. Finally it returned, crouching against the wall, and it

scratched slightly at the door, as a child would scratch with its finger-nail. Then all at once a head appeared against the window-pane—a white head with glaring eyes. A vague sound issued from its mouth—an inarticulate sound—a plaintive moan.

"Then a fearful noise broke out in the stillness. The old man had fired. The two sons ran at once and barricaded the window with the table.

"And I swear to you, when I heard the unexpected report of the gun, I was seized with such an agony of heart and soul and body that I felt ready to faint,—to die with fear.

"We stayed there until dawn, incapable of speech or of motion, shrinking together in an unspeakable agony of dread.

"No one dared unbar the door, until a faint ray of light appeared through a crevice.

"At the foot of the wall, against the door, the old dog lay dead, a bullet in his throat.

"He had managed to get out of the court by digging a hole under the palings."

The man with the sunburnt face was silent. Presently he added:

"And yet that night I was in no actual danger, but I would rather live over again all the hours in which I have been in deadly peril, than that single instant of the firing of the gun through that small window."

In spite of its horrors, nothing presents such a field for the writer of romance as slavery. Its strong lights and shades, its desperate and dramatic situations, are unmatched in any other among human conditions. Here is a dashing sea-story from the *Cornhill Magazine*, which would never have been written but for slavery.

RUNNING DOWN A SLAVE-SHIP.

"SAIL HO!"

Never, surely, did the cry fall upon more welcome ears, save and except those of men becalmed in a boat upon the open sea. For twelve weary days and nights had we, the officers and men of H. M. ship Petrel (six guns, Commander B. R. Neville), been cooped up in our iron prison, patrolling one of the hottest sections of the terrestrial globe, on the lookout for slavers. From longitude 4 north to longitude 4 south was our beat, and we dared not venture beyond these limits. Our instructions were to keep out of sight of land and try to intercept some of the large vessels which, it was suspected, carried cargoes of slaves from the —— coast.

The ship, the sea, the cloudless sky; there was nothing else to see, nothing else to think of. Work, study, play even, were alike impossible in that fierce, scorching heat. If you touched a bit of iron on deck, it almost burned your hand. If you lay down between decks covered with a sheet, you awoke in a bath of perspiration.

"Sail ho!" The man, in his excitement, repeated the shout before he could be hailed from the deck.

"Where away?" sang out the captain.

"Two points on the weather bow, sir," was the reply.

That phrase about the "weather bow" was a nautical fiction, for there was no wind to speak of, and what there was was nearly dead astern.

"Keep her away two points," said Commander Neville, and the order was promptly obeyed.

In a few seconds the news had spread through the

ship, and the men clustered on the bulwarks, straining their eyes to get a glimpse of the stranger. Even the stokers, poor fellows, showed their sooty faces at the engine-room hatchway. Of course, the stranger might be, and probably was, an innocent trader; but then she might be a slaver. The golden visions of prize-money floated before the eyes of every man and boy on board.

We did not steam very fast, as our supply of coal was limited, and it was about two hours before sundown when we fairly sighted the stranger. She was a long, three-masted schooner, with tall, raking masts, lying very low in the water. All her canvas was set, and as a little wind had sprung up, she was slipping thought the water at a fair pace.

"She looks for all the world like a slaver, sir," remarked Mr. Brabazon, the first lieutenant, to the commander.

Neville said nothing, but his lips were firmly compressed and a gleam of excitement was in his eyes.

"Fire a blank cartridge, Mr. O'Riley," said he to the second lieutenant; "and signal her to give her nationality and her code number."

This was done; and, in answer to the signal, the schooner slowly hoisted the American colors.

"She has eased away her sheets, and luffed a point or two, sir," said the quartermaster, touching his cap.

The captain merely answered this by a nod.

"Put a shot in your gun, Mr. O'Riley," said he. "Lower your hoist and make a fresh hoist demanding her name."

This was done, but the American took no notice.

"Fire a shot, Mr. O'Riley—wide, of course," said the commander.

Again the deafening report of the big gun sounded in our ears, and we could see the splash of the shot as it struck the water about fifty yards from the schooner. Immediately a flag was run up, then another, and another, and we saw that she was not giving us her code number, but was spelling out her name, letter by letter—The Black Swan.

"Just look that up in the U. S. Merchant Registry," said the captain to the first lieutenant. And in half-a-minute he had reported, "No such name, sir."

This was something more than suspicious. And the wind was rising.

"Hoist the signal for her to heave-to!" cried Commander Neville. "Take a boat and a half-dozen of hands, Mr. O'Riley," he continued; "board her, inspect her papers and come back to report. If her papers are not in order," added he, "you may search for slaves; but if they are, you had better do nothing further. You know it is clearly set down in the protocol that we are not entitled to search the hold if the papers are in order; and there have been complaints lately against some over-zealous officers, who have got into trouble in consequence. So be careful. But keep your eyes open. Note any suspicious circumstances, and come back as soon as you can, to report."

Before Lieut. O'Riley reached the ship he saw that everything about her had been sacrificed to speed. Her spars were unusually heavy for a craft of her size.

The British officer was received by a little, thin, elderly man, speaking with a strong Yankee accent.

"Produce your papers, if you please," said O'Riley. They were handed out at once, and seemed regular.

"What have you got on board?" was the next question.

"General cargo—dry goods and so on."

"Why isn't your name on the register?"

"Ain't it now? Well, I guess it must be because this is a new ship. We can't put our name on the register by telegraph, mister."

"Just tell your men to knock off the hatches. I want to have a look at your cargo."

The skipper shook his head.

"I've been delayed long enough," said he, "and have lost a great part of the only wind we've had in this darned latitude for a week."

"I will do it myself, then!" cried O'Riley.

"Not now, sir; not with six men when I have fifteen.

You have no right to search the hold of a respectable merchantman and disturb her cargo. Do you take me for a slaver, or what? If you must have the hatches up, send back to your man-of-war for a larger crew, so as to overpower me, you understand, and you may do it with pleasure. But I guess there'll be a complaint lodged at Washington, and you folks in London will have to pay for it. That's all, mister. I only want things fair and square, within my treaty rights."

And having delivered himself of this long speech, the Yankee skipper turned on his heel.

Of course, O'Riley could only return to the Petrel and report all this to his commander. "I'm convinced she is a slaver, sir," said he in conclusion.

"But you have no evidence of it; and you say the papers were all in order."

"Apparently they were, sir."

"Then I'm afraid I can do nothing," said the commander. And, to the deep disgust of the whole ship's crew, the order was given for the Petrel to return to her course.

All that night, however, Commander Neville was haunted by a doubt whether he had not better have run the risk of a complaint and a reprimand, rather than forego the overhauling of so suspicious-looking a craft; and in the morning a rumor reached his ears that the coxswain, who had accompanied Mr. O'Riley to the Black Swan, had noticed something about her of a doubtful nature. The man was sent for and questioned; and he said that, while the lieutenant was on board, the boat of which he was in charge had dropped a little way astern; and that he then noticed that the name of the vessel had been recently painted out, but that the last two letters were distinctly visible. And these letters were LE, not AN.

"The scoundrel said she was a new ship!" cried the commander. "'Bout ship!"

"We can't possibly catch her up, sir," said the first lieutenant, dryly.

"I don't know that, Mr. Brabazon," answered Neville.

"There has been hardly any wind; and we know the course she was steering. She could not expect to see us again; so in all probability she has kept to that course. By making proper allowances we may intercept her. I am convinced of it."

The hope of again encountering the Black Swan, faint as it was, caused quite a commotion in our little world. The day passed without our sighting a single sail; but when the morning dawned, Lieut. Brabazon was forced to own that the commander's judgment had proved better than his own. By the greatest good luck we had hit upon the right track. There, right in front of us, was the American schooner, her sails lazily flapping against her masts.

"Full speed ahead, and stand by!" shouted the captain down the engine-room tube.

"Signal to her to heave-to; and if she does not obey, fire a shot right across her bows, Mr. O'Riley," continued the commander. "Mr. Brabazon, you take a boat and thirty men well armed. Board her, and have all her hatches off at once. You'll stand no nonsense, I know."

"All right, sir," cried the lieutenant, an active, somewhat imperious officer, of the *Civis Romanus sum* type. He had been unusually disgusted at his commander's decision to leave the Black Swan without searching her, and he was delighted to see a more active policy.

"I say, Brabazon," whispered the commander to him, as he was going over the side, "you know I'm stepping a bit beyond bounds, and I'm just a little excited. If she turns out to be a slaver, as we suspect, step to the taffrail and wave your handkerchief, will you?"

"I will, sir; I'm certain it will be all right," cheerfully responded the first lieutenant.

A tall, slim, youngish man, dressed in white linen, received the British officer as he set foot on the deck of the Black Swan.

"I am at present in command of this craft, sir," said the young American. "The skipper is not fit for service just at present. We had a visit from you two days ago, I think. Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes. I want you to take off your hatches," said the lieutenant, sharply.

"Well, sir," began the Yankee, "I guess your demand is beyond your treaty powers."

"I know all about that. I must have the hatches off."

"And you are detaining me and overhauling my cargo on no grounds whatever——"

"Will you do it at once?" broke in the British officer.

"I repeat, on no grounds whatever, will I cause an in—ter—na—tional difficulty. It might bring re—markably unpleasant con—sequences to your captain. Now——"

"Off with your hatches!" cried the lieutenant.

"Sir!"

"If you don't, by George, I will!"

"You know clearly what you are doing, sir?"

"I do."

"And you know the risk you run?"

"I do. No more palaver. Off with them at once, or I'll break them open."

Further resistance was useless. The thing was done; and the moment the first hatch was raised, the sickening effluvium that issued from the hold proclaimed the truth. Nearly 300 slaves were packed between decks, and many of the poor creatures standing so close that they could not lie down.

With a look of speechless contempt at the young mate of the schooner, the lieutenant walked to the side of the ship and waved his handkerchief. That instant a loud British cheer rang over the water, given by the blue-jackets, who could be seen clustering in the rigging like bees.

"I told our skipper judgment would overtake us," said the Yankee. "Say, mister," he added in another tone, "seeing that the game's up, suppose we have a glass of iced champagne downstairs?"

The lieutenant hesitated. To drink with the mate of a slaver! But—iced champagne!

Slowly he moved toward the companion-way. "I don't mind if I do," he said at length; "and you may

as well bring up your papers with the drinks, for I shall carry them on board the Petrel. Of course you understand that you are my prize."

And having set a guard at the hatchways, the lieutenant descended the cabin stairs.

The iced champagne was duly forthcoming, and under its genial influence Lieut. Brabazon began to feel something like pity for the young man who had been so early seduced into the paths of crime. Probably he had a mother or a sweetheart somewhere in the States, who imagined that he was already on his way home, whereas now his character was ruined, even if he escaped a long term of imprisonment.

This feeling was strengthened, as he saw that his companion was gazing mournfully at his glass, without speaking a word. At length the young man lifted his head.

"Say, mister, what'll they do to me, think?"

"I can't tell. Of course, you know that what you have been engaged in is a kind of piracy!"

"No!"

"I believe so. Cargo and crew are confiscated, of course. What they will do with you I can't tell."

"They won't hang me, will they?"

"Probably not," said the lieutenant; "but let this be a warning to you. You see what it is to wander off the straight course and hanker after forbidden gains. Lead an honest life in future, when you are released from custody. Avoid vicious companions—— But what is this?" he cried, as his eyes fell on an empty scabbard hanging on the wall. It looked very like a United States service sword-scabbard, and immediately the thought darted through his mind that this hypocritical young Yankee (who had been pretending to wipe away a tear as he listened to the lieutenant's good advice) had been doing something worse, or at least more heavily punished, than running cargoes of slaves.

The British officer looked round the cabin. A United States navy cap was lying on a plush-covered bench.

"Ah! you've been having a brush with an American

man-of-war!" cried Lieut. Brabazon. "You will have to tell my superior officer how you came into possession of these articles. I must place you under arrest!" And bitterly regretting that he had sat down to table with the fellow, the British officer rushed on deck.

"Quartermaster!" he cried, "bring up a guard of four men, and take this man," pointing to the Yankee, who had followed him on deck, "to the Petrel. If he tries to escape, shoot him at once!"

The quartermaster advanced to seize the prisoner; but before he reached him he involuntarily stopped short. A roar of laughter sounded on his ears. The American mate and his companions were shrieking and staggering about the deck; even the crew of the slaver were, every man-jack of them, grinning from ear to ear. The lieutenant was dumfounded.

"Excuse me, sir; but the joke was too good," said the Yankee, coming forward and holding out his hand. "I am the first lieutenant of the United States warship Georgia, in command of a prize crew on board this vessel, taking her to —— to have her condemned. We seized her yesterday. Hearing that you had been on a visit to her the day before, and had gone away without doing anything, I couldn't resist the temptation of taking you in. Hope you don't bear malice? Let's finish that magnum of champagne."

It was evidently the best thing to be done; but the lieutenant was not a first-rate companion on that occasion.

"Give my respects to your commander," called out the United States officer, as his guest went down into his boat, "and advise him for me not to be so jolly particular another time. And I'll try to take your kind advice and sail a straight course in future!" he cried, as her majesty's boat shot away for the last time from the side of the Black Swan.

Even Emile Zola and Alphonse Daudet cannot compare in popularity among the French people with their distinguished fellow-craftsman, Georges Ohnet, the author of "The Ironmaster," "Serge Panine," and "De Rameau." The style of Ohnet is radically different from that of the great writers who have been mentioned, as will be seen by the following mournfully romantic story from his pen, "The Song of the Swan." It has been translated for ROMANCE by Laura E. Kendall. The closing scene must inevitably suggest to the reader a certain famous poem of Tennyson's.

THE SONG OF THE SWAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE clock in the City Hall at Dieppe was just striking ten when the gate of one of the handsomest residences on the Rue Aguado opened, giving passage to a tall, elegant, golden-haired girl, whose rosy face was illumined by a pair of candid blue eyes, and who wore a pretty yachting costume jauntily trimmed with silver braid. Behind her walked a highly respectable-looking, middle-aged lady, dressed in black silk, with a broad shade hat. She carried two umbrellas and a marine glass. The young lady paused to inhale a long draught of the bracing salt air. Then she tapped the ground with a dainty little foot incased in a neat patent-leather shoe, and exclaimed:

"What a fine day, Harriet!"

The respectable-looking dame, who was evidently a governess or hired companion, nodded assent, and giving her charge a gentle push, directed her course toward the beach.

Advancing with a rapid step, the two ladies had reached the Hotel Royal, when a tall young man, who was emerging from the courtyard with his head bowed on his breast, and with a deeply preoccupied air, almost ran against them. Lifting his hat, and apologizing with a slight foreign accent, he had stepped back to make way

for them, when an exclamation uttered by the young lady caused him to raise his eyes. A deep flush suffused his pale face, and it was with mingled delight and astonishment that he struck his hands together and exclaimed:

"Why, Daisy, is it you?"

"Stenio!" ejaculated the young lady, much agitated: then, seizing the gentleman's arm both familiarly and imperiously, and evidently a prey to the most intense interest and curiosity, she cried:

"First of all, tell me about my sister. Where is she? But, simpleton that I am! you are in Dieppe. Therefore Maud must be here, too, Stenio. Take me to her, I beg of you! How I long to see her!"

"Daisy, my dear child," stammered Stenio, "I—I——" His broad forehead, crowned with curling black hair, suddenly darkened like a lake in a wind storm; his eyes filled with tears, and his voice trembled.

Just then, the eminently respectable lady in the shade hat, who had seemed petrified with astonishment and dismay, shook off her torpor and nerved herself to interfere.

"My dear Daisy!" she exclaimed, hastily interposing herself between the young man and her charge, "I must beg you to remember your father's commands. If he suspected for an instant that such an interview would take place, and in my presence!—Oh! it is not to be thought of! Pray, pray reflect, my dear child! But if you are so unreasonable as to refuse to listen to me, this gentleman here must understand——"

Her overwhelming agitation put an abrupt end to this incoherent entreaty, and she stood staring at the two youthful culprits with horrified eyes, and in a state of mental perturbation that was both touching and ludicrous. But Daisy, knitting her delicate brows, and drawing down the corners of her little mouth until it assumed almost a threatening expression, said resolutely:

"My dear Harriet, listen to me. You know how docile I am generally, and how devoted I am to you;

but this, you see, is a very serious matter. It concerns my sister, you understand. O Harriet! How can you compel me to argue with you on such a subject!"

A flood of tears choked her utterance, and some visitors, who were just stepping into a landau to drive out to Pourville to breakfast, paused to gaze in wonder at the elderly lady whom this beautiful girl was addressing so vehemently. The governess shook her gray head with mule-like obstinacy, however, merely reiterating:

"But how about my lord's wishes?"

"And how about his daughter's entreaties?" retorted Daisy, quickly. "Harriet, you must choose between my father and me. You have often declared that nothing could induce you to leave me, and that when I marry, you intend to remain with me and take charge of my children. Very well, Harriet, if you will not consent to forget your duty for a moment to-day, to please me, you—you will break my heart, and all shall henceforth be at an end between us."

"Daisy, Daisy!" moaned the now thoroughly frightened governess, beginning to weep: "I'm sure I would do anything in the world for you, my dear child, as you know very well. If it were the sacrifice of my life you asked—but a thing so strenuously forbidden as this, —what will your father say if he ever hears——"

"I shall tell him myself. Come, Harriet, it is settled, is it not? I love you—you are a dear old darling! I shall never, never forget what you are doing for me—and M. Marackzy, my brother-in-law, will be equally grateful to you, I am sure!"

The gentleman inclined his head gravely. Then turning to Daisy, he said:

"You wish to see your sister. Do not be surprised if you find her much changed. Poor Maud is very ill."

The eyes which the girl lifted to her brother-in-law's face were full of anxiety and alarm.

"Not dangerously?" she asked, hastily.

"Yes, Daisy, dangerously."

The girl uttered a stifled exclamation; then, followed by Harriet, who acted much as if she were on her way

to the gallows, the two young people turned into the courtyard of the hotel. As they did so, they found themselves face to face with a fashionably attired lady, who was accompanied by a *religieuse* in the gray gown and white head-dress of the Little Sisters of the Poor. Daisy hastily averted her head and quickened her pace, hurrying Stenio along as though she did not wish to be seen in his company, but all her precautions were useless, for they had scarcely passed when Daisy heard the lady exclaim in tones of profound astonishment:

"Miss Mellivan and Marackzy, as I live!"

Daisy's heart sank within her, but the longing that filled her soul was too strong to be resisted, and when Stenio opened the door of the ladies' entrance, she unhesitatingly entered, followed by her governess.

The *religieuse* had paused to gaze back at the distinguished-looking stranger, and as he disappeared from view, she lifted her eyes heavenward, and exclaimed:

"Ah! if Marackzy would take part in our concert, what a godsend it would be to our poor little ones!"

"So you know Marackzy, Sister Elizabeth?"

"By name, madame. Is he not known everywhere as the peer of Liszt and Rubinstein?"

"Yes, but, unfortunately for us, he cannot be induced to appear in public since his wife's health began to fail. Only a short time ago, in Vienna, he positively refused to play before the Emperor, though Francis Joseph is one of his warmest admirers and most generous patrons."

"Might he not be willing to do for unfortunate children what he refused to do for a monarch?"

"There is only one person who could persuade him to do it. Though, now I think of it, Daisy Mellivan might. What a fine thing it would be! We could ask forty francs a ticket, and yet the hall would be filled to overflowing. The receipts would amount to at least thirty thousand francs."

Sister Elizabeth crossed her hands upon her breast in a sort of ecstasy, and her lips moved as if in prayer.

CHAPTER II.

STENIO MARACKZY was unquestionably the finest performer that ever made the sonorous wood of a violin vibrate beneath his touch. As great in technique as Paganini, he could perform marvellous feats with his bow when the whim seized him; but his world-wide fame was not due to this fact alone. Though he had the fingers to execute, he also had the imagination needed to create, and he was an *improvisatore* of wonderful power, as well as of incomparable grace.

His magic bow evoked in turn melodies depicting the dreary winters of the immense plains traversed by the Danube, with their marshes peopled with silent herons; the rollicking gayety of village fêtes, where golden-haired maidens danced the *czarda* with their lovers; and the march of advancing armies, resounding with the blare of trumpets, the thunder of cannon and the clank of sabres. The very spirit of Hungary, melancholy, joyous and heroic alternately, spoke through Marackzy's wonderful violin, and the natural result of all this was to make him quite as popular as Kossuth in his native land, and to make every one in Europe, who had the good fortune to hear him, his enthusiastic admirer.

The son of the chapel-master in the royal palace at Pesth, he had not grown up rude and untutored like the savage Tziganis that roam the banks of the Danube; on the contrary, his education had been as carefully conducted as his musical training. Attracting the attention of the Emperor one day while executing a violin solo composed by his father, he was induced to go to Vienna to take part in the court concerts there, and at once created a profound sensation. He was the rage that winter, and won the hearts of the proud court beauties as much by his personal beauty as by his talent. He was twenty years of age at this time, a high-bred gentleman in appearance, as well as in manner, with a slightly melancholy air and gentle, though

lustrous, black eyes, in which the passion of the Orient burned.

The golden-haired Viennese raged over the handsome, dark-eyed youth, and Stenio became the petted darling of the Austrian nobility. He bore his honors meekly, however, never once putting on the airs of a parvenu. Without the slightest apparent effort, he deported himself as the peer of the proudest nobleman, and even of the arch-dukes themselves. He spent money as lavishly and easily as he made it. No beggar ever left his presence empty-handed; but when a merchant prince begged him to play at some private entertainment, he demanded an exorbitant compensation.

For ten years, handsome, rich and fêted, he travelled through Europe, greeted everywhere with frenzied applause, sowing melodies like pearls along his pathway, and making the fortunes of servile *impressarios*. Nevertheless, every year in the month of July, he suddenly disappeared from view, and the divine strains of his violin were not heard again until October. Like a meteor that ploughs its brilliant way through the heavens only to suddenly vanish in darkness, so this great artist suddenly disappeared in the midst of his triumphs, leaving every one to wonder what had become of him.

While ingenious reporters were concocting all sorts of stories and explanations, Stenio, living in strict seclusion on a small estate near Pesth, which he had purchased for his father, recovered from his fatigue and became a boy again in the quiet country home of the old chapel-master.

No more impassioned improvisations, no more quaint fancies and weird dreams translated into music now; but the tranquillizing and elevating study of the great masters of his beloved art. Marackzy, in docile compliance with his father's wishes, spent his evenings in interpreting Mozart, Beethoven, and Weber, refreshing his spirit at the very fountain-head of true inspiration.

Loaded down with honors, rich in fame and in gold, he reached the age of thirty without having known a grief

or a care; and it was then that, yielding to the importunities of a celebrated manager, he consented to cross the ocean and give a series of performances in America.

Prior to his departure, however, he decided to spend a few weeks in England; for the Prince of Wales, who was one of his most ardent admirers, had invited him to be his guest during the hunting season. Moreover, the prince was especially desirous that the Queen, who had never heard Marackzy, should now enjoy that pleasure.

The performance was to take place at Windsor Castle, and only a limited number of invitations had been issued, though frantic efforts had been made by the leaders of fashion to secure places among the favored ones. When Stenio entered the drawing-room, violin in hand, the flattering murmur that rose from the ladies grouped around the sovereign aroused in the musician a natural desire to do his best. He smiled faintly, and giving a slight tap with his bow, to notify his accompanist that he was ready, began.

He played first a sweet, sad reverie, the plaint of a suffering soul about to depart from earth—one of his own compositions, upon which he had bestowed the title of "The Song of the Swan."

Under his skilful fingers, the memories of a happy and brilliant past were interwoven with the heart-rending sorrow of a lonely and desolate present. It was not the violin that spoke now; it was a deeply wounded heart, breathing out its intolerable anguish and regret with its last sigh. Stenio, who had played on with half-closed eyes, according to his wont, so completely absorbed in the music as to be entirely oblivious to all that was going on around him, had just reached the concluding notes, pure as the breath of an angel re-ascending to the sky, when a deep sob, which suddenly broke the breathless silence of the enchanted audience, made him lift his eyes.

One swift glance around the immense room, glittering with lights and diamonds, and lavishly adorned with

flowers, revealed a few feet from him, on the first row of seats, a fair young girl, down whose cheeks a flood of tears was streaming. With hands clasped as if in prayer, she sat there perfectly motionless. The world and all that it contained had vanished, and, borne upward on the wings of the great musician's inspiration, she was floating on and on up to the very gates of heaven.

The last soft, sweet note died away. It was followed by a moment of eloquent silence; then came a frantic outburst of applause, as the entire audience, forgetting all conventionalities, rose to do homage to Stenio.

The young girl felt some one touch her gently on the arm, and heard a soft voice whisper:

"Maud, Maud!"

Starting suddenly, like one just aroused from sleep, she uttered a long sigh. Then, smiling up at the sister who was bending anxiously over her, she said softly:

"Oh, Daisy, how far away I seemed to be!"

She saw the musician standing in the midst of a group of haughty duchesses, receiving their compliments with quiet gravity; then, after a short conversation, she perceived that he was coming toward her, accompanied by the prince himself. In another instant, Stenio was bowing low before her, while his royal patron said:

"Miss Mellivan, my friend, M. Marackzy, requests the honor of an introduction to you."

Maud faltered out a few incoherent words. All the blood in her body seemed to rush back to her heart. When she recovered her composure, the prince had moved away, Stenio was preparing to play again, and, under the magical influence of his inspired bow, the young girl's soul was once more wafted up to the very portals of Paradise.

Marackzy's stay, which was to have been limited to a few days, was prolonged several weeks. The American newspapers announced that his much talked-of visit had only been postponed, but it soon became apparent that it would not take place at all. An irresistible

charm held Stenio captive in England. He absolutely refused to give any concerts, however; and seemed desirous of making people forget that he was a professional artist. He went into society constantly, and hunted and danced, leading the life of a *grand seigneur*. It was necessary to employ great powers of persuasion to induce him to play, even in private. Indeed, he turned a deaf ear to the solicitations of all save a few ladies. Miss Mellivan, particularly, seemed to be endowed with the power to overcome Stenio's reluctance. At her bidding, he would take up his violin, wherever he might be, and play his most impassioned melodies with wonderful feeling and expression.

The Marquis of Mellivan-Grey, Lord of the Admiralty, and an important personage in the social and political world, had welcomed the celebrated Hungarian cordially on his arrival in England; and late in the spring he invited the musician to spend a few days with him on his Irish estate, where the noble lord proposed to introduce Marackzy to the aristocrats of that country, the rôle of Mæcenas being eminently gratifying to his vanity.

Left a widower while his two daughters were still in their infancy, he had entrusted them to the care of a governess, a timorous and puritanical old maid. Believing that he had thus prepared for any emergency, he lived on in fancied security, little suspecting the powerful influence which Stenio had already acquired over Maud. Full of pride of race, he did not suppose for an instant that any child of his would stoop to one of humble origin. To listen to this gifted musician, and even to compliment him, was all very well, provided one maintained the position of a superior, well pleased with an agreeable servant; but to treat him as an equal —to fall in love with him—such an absurd idea as this never once entered his aristocratic brain.

Established on his fine estate of Dunloë, in the neighborhood of Dublin, he had been awaiting Marackzy's arrival nearly a week,—for the musician had deferred his coming from day to day on one pretext and another—

when one evening, preceded by a telegram announcing the hour of his arrival, he came.

The carriage that brought him had scarcely passed through the gateway, when Maud hastily left the drawing-room and ran up to her chamber, pale and agitated. Lord Mellivan, who was standing in the doorway, advanced to meet his guest, condescendingly offering his hand. Stenio bowed respectfully, without taking it. Then he said gravely:

"My lord, before accepting your hospitality, I must ask the favor of a few moments' conversation with you. After you have granted me a hearing, I shall know whether I am to become your guest or depart."

Lord Mellivan, greatly astonished, looked searchingly at Marackzy, and noticed that he was not attired in travelling costume, but in formal visiting dress. He noticed too, that there was no luggage on the carriage that had brought the visitor, showing that he did not expect to remain. With a wave of the hand, the marquis invited the musician to enter, and, without another word, the two proceeded to the drawing-room.

The interview lasted about a quarter-of-an-hour. When it terminated, the door opened and Marackzy came out, followed by Lord Mellivan. On the threshold, Stenio turned, with an imploring gesture, to which the nobleman responded only with a contemptuous smile. The musician uttered a smothered exclamation, and as the marquis re-entered the castle without troubling himself further about his guest's presence, Stenio cast an eager glance around him. At that moment the curtain at one of the windows in the second story was drawn aside, and a beautiful face appeared there. Marackzy addressed a despairing gesture of farewell to it. His features were distorted with grief, as he sprang into the carriage and was driven rapidly away.

For several days afterward, Miss Maud did not leave her own apartments, and it was reported that she was ill. Shortly afterward, Lord Mellivan returned to England, accompanied only by his younger daughter. A rumor was soon rife that the elder daughter of the

marquis showed symptoms of going into a decline, and that the physicians would not answer for her life unless she led a quiet and secluded existence under the more genial skies of Ireland. Lord Mellivan's evident depression of spirits seemed convincing proof of the truth of this rumor; nevertheless, several garrulous persons declared that they had seen Maud with Marackzy in Germany, and these reports speedily assumed such a scandalous character that the relatives and friends of Lord Mellivan, after conferring together, concluded to warn him. He listened to them in frigid silence. Then, with an evident effort, he said:

"I am glad that this allusion to my daughter Maud has been made, but it must be the last. It is true that she has deserted my roof to follow Marackzy. They were married in Cowes before leaving England. During our stay in Ireland, this musician had the audacity to come and ask Miss Mellivan's hand in marriage. I replied by ordering him to leave the house immediately. He then declared that my daughter loved him, and that it was with her knowledge and consent he had taken this step. He added that he was rich and famous, and entreated me to reconsider my decision. I, of course, persisted in my refusal. He went away. I was then obliged to listen to Maud's frantic prayers and entreaties. She seemed wild with despair. The scoundrel had bewitched her. For days at a time, she sat without uttering a word and almost without eating, gazing intently into vacancy in an attitude of breathless attention, as if listening to distant music. I did everything in my power to divert her mind; but without success. I appealed to her pride; I endeavored to make her realize the wide social gulf that separated her from the man she loved. I strictly forbade my daughter Daisy, and Miss Harriet, her governess, to leave her alone for a moment; but one morning they found her room vacant. She had fled, deserting her father and sister and the roof under which her mother died—deserting everything for the sake of an adventurer."

Lord Mellivan buried his face in his hands and re-

mained silent for a moment. Then with an angry gesture he added:

"I gave orders that the unfortunate girl's name should never again be uttered in my presence. I do not know Marackzy's wife. I have but one daughter, now. You wished to know the truth. You have heard it."

CHAPTER III.

People gradually became tired of talking of the affair; besides, the struggle between Lord Mellivan and Stenio was not an equal one, by any means. Never had the wonderful talent of the musician shone with such brilliancy as immediately after his marriage. One might have supposed, with reason, that he wished, by his successes, to make his young wife forget the sorrow his love had caused her. He created an atmosphere of triumph about her. He overcame all prejudices; he won the sympathies of every one; he compelled even the most worldly to do homage to his talent, and to censure the severity of the angry parent.

For two years he kept Europe at his feet, and gave his young wife all the fame that she could have dreamed of. Received everywhere, both at court and in the fashionable world, she shone a star there, by the charms of her rare beauty.

About a year after their marriage, a child was born to them—a child with golden hair like its mother's. In the joys of maternity, Maud's last regret vanished, and for several months the past was entirely forgotten. She allowed herself to be swept unresistingly on by the powerful current that bore her from fête to fête, and ovation to ovation, in the dazzling light and plaudits of a sort of apotheosis.

His talent having come to maturity, Marackzy ceased to be content with the ephemeral and fantastic compositions that sprang into being each day beneath the magical touch of his agile fingers. He aimed higher now, and aspired to the more lasting triumphs of operatic composition. The opera-house at Vienna was at

his disposal, and he produced there, in quick succession, a ballet, the *Djins*, in which he allowed his wonderful imagination full play, and an opera, *Mathias Corvin*, in which Hungarian patriotism spoke in thrilling accents. After these new triumphs, the enthusiasm of his admirers knew no bounds, and "the Hungarian Chopin," as he was now called, seemed to be universally regarded as the equal of the most illustrious composers.

It was then that Maud, though without the knowledge of her husband, tried to effect a reconciliation with her father. She wrote him a tender and submissive letter, in which she implored his forgiveness. She knew that worldly success is a powerful mediator, and fancied that her proud father would be less severe on the wife of Marackzy, the composer, than on the wife of Stenio, the great violinist. A week afterward, the letter was returned to her unopened. The haughty nobleman's pride had been too deeply wounded by his daughter's desertion. He had kept his word; he would hold no further communication with her.

It was a terrible blow to Maud, but it was slight in comparison with that which Fate still had in store for her.

On the evening of the day when her letter was returned to her unopened, her little boy was taken ill. The mother's impressionable nature was struck by this coincidence, and she fancied there was some mysterious connection between her father's anger and her child's illness.

For more than a week she nursed her little one with impassioned tenderness and untiring care; but all in vain. His rosy cheeks grew pale; his clear eyes dimmed; the lips that had known only smiles assumed an expression of mournful gravity, and, gently and quietly as a little bird falls asleep, the child died.

Then the frail and gentle mother was seized with an attack of wild delirium that terrified those around her. She uttered the fierce cries of a wounded lioness; she cursed heaven, and hurled imprecations on all mankind;

she shrieked for her father, declaring him responsible for the calamity that had overtaken her; then she relapsed into a state of profound melancholy. She remained silent for weeks at a time, with her eyes fixed upon vacancy, and without shedding a tear or uttering a prayer. Stenio, in despair, made every possible effort to arouse her from this frightful torpor. He tried to comfort her, but she did not seem to hear him. Even his inspired bow proved powerless, for he played on and on without being able to attract her attention.

She changed greatly; her face became emaciated and her eyes sunken, and a dry, hacking cough racked her frail chest incessantly. Stenio, becoming greatly alarmed about her, consulted the best physicians in Vienna. They all advised him to take his wife to Italy. In a milder climate, she would be almost sure to regain her health; and far from the land in which her terrible loss had befallen her, she would eventually find peace again.

For six months Marackzy took his idolized wife from town to town, in quest of bright sunlight, fragrant flowers and balmy breezes—all that makes life pleasant. Still, no improvement was apparent in her condition. The malady with which she was suffering was one of the soul; no earthly physician could cure it.

But in proportion as her physical strength waned, her mental powers seemed to become more vigorous. She shook off her torpor, and, as if secretly aware of the danger of her situation, she forced herself to console Stenio. One might almost have supposed that a feeling which might be called the very quintessence of coquetry prompted her to appear more charming than ever, in order to make herself more deeply regretted. She talked a great deal, and with much animation, interesting herself in everything that her husband did and pretending to form all sorts of delightful plans for the future.

Meanwhile, summer had come again, and Maud secretly deplored the impossibility of paying a visit to her native land.

"It seems to me that I should regain all my former strength there," she said, sadly. "How I should love to see our beautiful lakes again and the verdant foliage of our forests! Oh, Ireland! it is there that my sister is. But my father, too, is there."

Her face clouded, and, in lower tones, she added:

"And I cannot return there. He has forbidden it."

Then, in sorrowful accents:

"But how delightful it would be to see it all again! Only my native air can cure me, it seems to me. Oh, Stenio, to be well again! To feel that I shall remain with you for years and years, perhaps!"

Then, so faintly that her husband was unable to catch the words, she sighed:

"But my father will not permit it!"

At last her desire to once more behold the waters that laved the shores of England became too strong to be repressed. She felt that she should then be infinitely nearer to her former home. The sea that separated her from it could then, at least, be traversed by her longing eyes.

It was this desire that had brought her to Dieppe.

CHAPTER IV.

On a large bed, in which her form, fragile now as that of a mere child, seemed lost, the young wife lay sleeping when her sister entered. Her beautiful hair had lost its golden tint, but her eyes seemed even larger and darker, and in their depths lurked the despairing resignation of a poor creature who realizes that she is being swept swiftly onward to eternity. Two hectic spots glowed on her cheeks, and her emaciated hands had become almost transparent.

The pure air and bright sunlight streamed in through the open window, but the invalid's breathing was labored. Now and then a dry cough racked her delicate frame. Her sister had buried her face in the pillow, and was sobbing bitterly, while Stenio gazed down at the two sisters, united again after so much misery, and

gloomily compared Maud with what she had been when he first saw her.

Daisy, fresh, healthy and charming, was the image of Maud at the age of twenty, and, with a throb of anguish, Marackzy said to himself: "It is I who have transformed the happy, beautiful girl into the desolate, grief-stricken creature, who is slowly dying before my eyes. I am the cause of all her misery. She sacrificed everything for my sake, and what have I been able to give her in exchange? Only a little fleeting fame, and a life of ease and luxury, no whit superior to that she had led from her birth. If our child could have lived, his caresses might have dried her tears."

The great musician bowed his head, and bitter drops streamed down his own pale cheeks.

"Stenio, why are you standing there, apart from us?" asked his wife, suddenly. "Come here. Why, you are weeping! What is the matter?"

"Nothing, my darling; at least, nothing but the delight it gives me to see your sister with you again."

"It gives me delight, too, Stenio, and it is you have given it to me," said Maud, with a smile. "It seems to me that I feel much better now that Daisy has come. If I could only keep her with me awhile, I believe she would restore my health and strength. But it is not Daisy only that I long to see."

Her voice had become very sad, and a shadow passed over her face.

"Ah, if my father would only forgive me!" she added, with a sob.

"Maud!" exclaimed Daisy and Stenio in the same breath.

But she had already raised herself up in bed, and, with eyes glittering feverishly, she continued:

"Yes, it is his anger that is killing me! His anger is more than I can bear! It has broken my heart. Oh! if he would only come to me! if I could see him again even for a moment! He need not speak to me; he needn't even enter the house, if he does not wish to. He might just walk down the street like any stranger.

I could see him then, and even that would save me, it seems to me."

Completely exhausted, she sank back on her pillows, gasping for breath. Several anxious moments passed before she revived; then, pressing her face gently against Daisy's cheek, she whispered:

"Forgive me, dearest, for paining you. It seems to be my fate to bring sorrow upon those I love, and yet I am not bad at heart."

On hearing these words, uttered with angelic sweetness, Marackzy fell on his knees beside the bed, and pressed his burning brow on his sick wife's hand.

"You are a martyr!" he cried. "You shall not blame yourself. If any one is in fault, it is I. I crossed your pathway only to fill it with sorrow——"

"No, to make it beautiful and brilliant," she interposed, tenderly.

"Ah! what do wealth and fame amount to now! Oh! why am I not the one who is ill and dying? If I were to die, your father would forgive you! It is not upon you he is wreaking his vengeance, but upon me. He knows only too well that each pang you suffer rends my heart. It is this that makes him so implacable. Oh, Maud, I would gladly sacrifice my life to give you a moment's joy! What do you wish me to do? Just tell me, and it will make me so happy to gratify you!"

Maud was silent for a moment; then, in tones so low that her husband divined the words rather than heard them, she murmured:

"If I could only see my father again before I die!"

Marackzy turned as pale as death. He had offered Maud his life, but she demanded a much greater sacrifice. Still, he did not hesitate.

"Very well," he said, quietly. "You shall see him again, cost what it may!"

"Oh, Stenio, how good you are, and how much I love you!" murmured Maud, fondly.

The great musician had sufficient control over himself to smile down upon her; then, turning to his sister-in-law, he remarked gently:

"It is getting late, my dear Daisy, and I think it would be well for you to return home. Tell your father all that has occurred here this morning, and ask him if he will grant me the honor of an interview. However painful it may be to him—and to me—I think he will see the necessity of complying with my request."

"I will do as you wish," replied Daisy, promptly.

And after once more embracing her sister, she left the room, accompanied by Stenio.

CHAPTER V.

Lord Mellivan's yacht was lying at anchor in the harbor, and for more than an hour its owner had been striding up and down the cabin, awaiting Marackzy's arrival. A thick, soft carpet deadened the sound of his footsteps, and the highly polished mahogany wainscoting shone brightly in the midday sun. Through an open port-hole came the briny scent of the rising tide, and the creaking of the windlass on a coal vessel that was discharging her cargo could be distinctly heard in the distance, but the venerable earl neither saw nor heard anything of all this. His thoughts were far away. In imagination, he again beheld two little girls playing on the grass in the garden of his big house in Grosvenor Square. And he, still a young man, and barely two years a widower, watched them with a swelling heart. He had resolved then and there to live only for these two beloved children, henceforth, and never to marry again, in spite of the entreaties of his friends. He had kept his word; the two children had grown to womanhood without knowing a grief or a care, and their father, who had sacrificed so much for them, fancied that he should soon see the dream of his life realized,—see them married, and happy mothers in their turn, and spend his declining years in their pleasant homes.

What fine projects, what delightful dreams, but how short their duration!

Suddenly the scene changed. The earl was at Dunloë again. It was a summer evening. Maud had not

appeared downstairs during the day, and when Miss Harriet went up to beg her to come to dinner, she found the room empty. In obedience to the earl's orders, the men-servants searched the forest and dragged the lake, apprehensive of some great calamity.

But a calamity greater than they dared to suspect had befallen their proud master. The eldest daughter of the house could not be found. She had fled with the man she loved. And before the earl's mental vision rose the olive face of Stenio, with its burning eyes and inspired expression.

How often this face had haunted the old earl during the past three years, wearing the sneering, diabolical expression of a veritable demon! Oh! what a wrong Marackzy had done him! How could he ever be made to atone for it? By wounding his pride and breaking his heart?

But Stenio was famous and wealthy and happy. Success seemed to attend him in everything. He had raised himself to the level of the man who had scorned him, and the great composer seemed indeed worthy to be the son-in-law of a descendant of one of the heroes of the Norman conquest. The earl hated him all the more bitterly on this account, however, for the fact of having misjudged him only increased his animosity.

And but now some one had said to him: "Marackzy is in this city; he wishes to see you. By a single word you can make him the most miserable of men, or render him unspeakably happy. You are the arbiter of his fate." The longed-for day had come at last.

The earl paused at the port-hole. On the brow of one of the neighboring cliffs stood the little church of Bon-Secours. As he was gazing abstractedly at the modest structure, the bell on the church in Pollet began to toll, and the distant sound was so mournful that the old man shuddered. He somehow fancied that it was tolling for the dead, and the thought that it might toll for his daughter on the morrow occurred to him.

Just then a heavy step was heard descending the companion-way, and the sailing-master appeared in the

doorway. The tall form of Marackzy towered behind him. The earl dismissed the sailor with a gesture. He bowed deferentially and stepped aside, and Maud's husband entered. The great artist bent his head, and said slowly, as if he could scarcely force the words through his contracted throat:

"I thank you, my lord, for having consented to see me. You know the great misfortune that brings me here. I come as a suppliant with clasped hands to—to entreat your forgiveness for your daughter."

"Say, rather, your wife," interrupted the old earl, sternly.

Trembling with emotion, Stenio continued hastily:

"No, for the child whom you once loved. Forget that she bears my name, remember only that she once bore yours. Do not argue with me, do not discuss the matter with yourself. Let your heart speak. If she were well and strong, you might reproach her, but she is ill and suffering. A harsh word from you would kill her. Be generous; cease to brood over your wrongs. Alas! it is not the hour to punish, but to forgive. One cannot be harsh to the dying."

"Is it really true that her life is in danger?" asked the earl, with an anxiety which he tried his best to conceal.

"Do you think that I should be here if that were not the case?" returned Marackzy, quietly.

"Then reflect upon what you have done!" exclaimed Lord Mellivan, after a moment's silence. "You stole my child from me only to bring her to a miserable end! She was strong and well and happy when you took her away, and now you tell me she is dying. Ah! I was wretched enough when she deserted me. It cost me agony enough to tear her from my heart. Why do you speak of her now? Leave me in peace! I do not even know her. I have but one child. My other daughter, the one I idolized, is not dying; she is already dead. I have mourned for her three long years!"

The earl stifled a groan, and bowing his white head on his hands, seemed to have entirely forgotten Stenio's presence.

"Have you no mercy?" pleaded Marackzy. "What can I say to move you? Surely you can see that I am ready and willing to do anything!"

"Anything?" repeated Lord Mellivan, looking up; "even to give me back my child?"

"Do you mean that you would separate me from her?" exclaimed Stenio.

"Do you suppose I would consent to see her in your presence? There is no room for you and for me by her bedside. It must be either her father or her husband. But what is the use of discussing the matter? Did she not choose between us long ago?"

"My lord, this is atrocious!" cried Marackzy, his eyes flashing indignantly.

"And pray what gives you the right to judge me?"

"My own sorrow. I love your daughter so much that I am willing to sacrifice everything for her sake. As you are implacable, impose your own conditions. I will submit to them. If they give her a moment's happiness, I shall not deem them too grievous to be borne."

The earl turned to Stenio, and in a tone of intense hatred, said:

"You took her from me living. I demand that you restore her to me when dead. I will tear her from you in your sorrow, as you tore her from me in my joy. You deprived me of her caresses; I will take her beyond the reach of your tears. No vestige of her shall be left to you; she shall become mine again. She will sleep beside her mother in the family vault, and you must solemnly pledge yourself never to set foot on British soil again."

Marackzy looked intently at the earl.

"And you will forgive her under these conditions?" he asked.

The nobleman bowed his assent.

Marackzy did not flinch; his livid face was immovable, his eyes dry.

"It is my life that you ask!" he exclaimed. "Very well, I give it. Only be as kind to your daughter as you are cruel to me. Let each pang that I am to suffer be

an atonement for her, and as I am to give a tear for each moment of joy, avenge yourself fully and make her happy, blissfully happy!"

Lord Mellivan gave no sign of having heard Stenio's words. Maud must die for Marackzy to be punished. If the earl had been allowed to choose between his daughter's recovery, and the accomplishment of his revenge, who knows what he might have answered?

Walking to the door, he opened it.

"There is no necessity of prolonging this interview further," he said coldly. "In an hour I will be with my daughter: but as I have no desire to remain in the same town with you, I shall leave for England this evening."

CHAPTER VI.

THE sight of her father seemed to give Maud a fresh lease on life. She was able to sit up now, and even to walk to the window. One might almost have supposed that the doctors were mistaken, and that she had sufficient strength left to conquer her disease; but Stenio was not deceived; he saw that she was merely buoyed up temporarily by this unexpected happiness, and that the end was not far off.

Lord Mellivan had departed, leaving Daisy and Miss Harriet behind, however; and the constant presence of these loved ones was a great pleasure to Maud.

As she watched her sister moving about the room, diffusing the ineffable charm of youth and health and grace about her, Maud tried to think that all she had suffered had been only a dream. She had married Stenio with her father's consent; she had never been exiled from her native land nor been separated from her sister. And the fair child she had mourned so bitterly was not dead, but had just been born. When the grim reality forced itself upon her, she resolutely closed her eyes, and murmured:

"It ought to have been so; it is so!"

The news of the presence of Marackzy and his wife in Dieppe soon spread through the town, and they had

many visitors, but their doors were closed to all. The great musician refused to see any one; but it is easier to withstand the combined forces of land and water than woman's curiosity. The races had filled the town with a crowd of people who had nothing to do but amuse themselves. The excitement caused by the elopement of a pretty Spanish countess with a young Jewish banker had died out, and the fashionable world was longing for a new sensation. Sister Elizabeth chancing to express her regret at the impossibility of inducing Marackzy to appear in public, the whole history of his elopement was related with much animation by some of the lady-patronesses of the institution, who would have maligned themselves rather than cease talking scandal.

"How could any one elope with a musician!" remarked one lady with a scornful air.

"You never heard Stenio, my dear," retorted a golden-haired duchess, "or you wouldn't speak so contemptuously of the love he is capable of inspiring. The power of music over these sensitive creatures, ourselves,—mere bundles of nerves,—is something marvellous! The profoundest passions of modern times have been inspired by great musicians. They exert a wonderful fascination over one. When Vignot seated himself at the piano and sang one of Mephistopheles' songs, I have seen ladies crowd around him like birds around a serpent, old and gray-headed as he was; Marackzy is young and handsome, and has eyes that sparkle like diamonds. But let's drop that subject, and devote our attention to inducing him to play at our concert."

"How do you hope to accomplish it?"

"His wife is the only person who can persuade him to do it, but it is difficult to gain access to her. Their doors are closed to all visitors, but perhaps I might succeed in gaining an entrance."

"Do make the attempt, I beseech you," cried Sister Elizabeth. "My poor and I will bless you forever!"

"I haven't seen Marackzy for years," said the duchess, thoughtfully. "Well, I'll see what I can do. It's for the poor."

That same evening, on returning from his accustomed walk, Marackzy found a lady lying in wait for him in the corridor leading to his rooms. It was quite dark, and the musician bowed and was about to pass on, when the lady held out her hand, saying:

"Is it possible you don't know me, dear Monsieur Marackzy? Have I changed so much as all that?"

As Stenio still hesitated, she took him by the arm and drew him to the window.

"Shall I be obliged to introduce myself?" she asked, with smiling assurance.

"I beg your grace's pardon," replied Stenio, bowing, with a forced smile. "I have been a little absent-minded, of late, and that must be my excuse."

He made an attempt to escape, but the lady, having engaged in the contest, was resolved not to be worsted. Seating herself upon a bench near by, she compelled Marackzy to sit down beside her.

"What sore trials you have had since we last met!" she began. "I assure you that I have pitied you with my whole heart. And how you have been missed in the musical world! I am rejoiced to hear that your wife's health is improving. How handsome she was when I saw her in Vienna two years ago! May I not hope to have the pleasure of seeing her?"

"It is impossible. The doctor has forbidden her to see any one."

"How unfortunate! really, how very unfortunate!" repeated the lady.

"May I ask to what I am indebted for the honor of this visit?" inquired Marackzy, with a tinge of impatience in his tone.

"O you dear, great artist!" exclaimed the duchess, clasping her hands entreatingly. "There is so much want and misery in the world, and you are so powerful! A single word from you would suffice to save many poor creatures. Must I appeal to your generous heart in vain? Say yes, I beg of you, without knowing what it is about! You will never regret it, and we shall be eternally grateful to you."

"In short, you wish me to play at a concert," interrupted Marackzy. "It is useless to say any more, I——"

"But it is for the benefit of the orphans."

"If you need money for your poor, I will give it to you, but I cannot appear in public, when death is in my heart. You must not ask nor expect it."

An angry flush suffused his face, and in his excitement he spoke in much louder tones than usual.

"Pray do not insist, madame," he added, seeing that the lady was about to make another attempt to persuade him, and, drawing out his purse, he placed several bank-notes in the visitor's hand. Then, with a polite but cold "Good-evening," he conducted her to the hall door, bowed again and, turning, directed his steps toward his wife's room.

On hearing her husband enter, Maud raised her head and asked feebly:

"To whom were you talking just now, Stenio? You seemed angry. What is the matter?"

"Nothing, my dear, nothing."

"But I fancied I heard a lady's voice."

"Fie, Maud! Can it be that you are jealous?" asked Marackzy, with feigned gayety.

"Not jealous, but curious."

"Well, people have found out that we are here, and I have been asked to play at a concert——"

"For the poor, I suppose."

"Yes, that is always the excuse," replied Stenio, bitterly. "Are the poor the only persons who need sympathy?"

A shadow passed over the invalid's face and Marackzy paused instantly; then, in a calmer voice, he added:

"I am sorry for them, Maud, you know that, and I gave liberally in your name and mine for the poor children——"

"Ah, it was for poor children!" exclaimed Maud. "How terrible it must be to see children suffer! A child's tears rend a mother's heart. Stenio, you must do something for those poor children, something more

than you have done. If it is a trial to you, I ask it in the name of the dear little one we lost!"

She sank back on her pillow, weeping bitterly.

"Maud, Maud!"

Stenio and Daisy bent over her in terror, fearing that this excitement would prove too much for her.

"I will obey you, I will obey you, but for Heaven's sake calm yourself," exclaimed Marackzy. "Of course, I will do it, if you wish! Is there anything on earth I would not do for you?"

Maud was seized with a fit of coughing that racked her frail form and brought a hectic flush to her cheeks. Becoming composed again, she pressed her husband's hand fondly, and exclaimed:

"Thank you, Stenio, thank you. You see I want you to play for me, as well as for those poor children. It is so long since I heard you! Oh, I know you will say that you will play for me alone at any time, but that is not the way I want to hear you. I long to hear you play once more in the presence of an admiring and enraptured crowd, as on the evening when I first met you. It will recall the happiest moment of my life, when I was full of hope and joy and the future looked so bright——"

Another violent fit of coughing interrupted her.

"Don't try to talk any more, my darling," pleaded Stenio, kissing her thin hands. "You are tiring yourself out. I will do as you wish, for I am only too glad to be able to give you a moment's pleasure."

An angelic smile illumined her face, and, with Stenio's hand clasped in hers, she fell into a sweet slumber.

CHAPTER VII.

All the fashionables of Dieppe were assembled in the big concert hall of the Hotel des Chauds Bains. In the first row of seats sat the duchess, who was credited with the honor of securing Marackzy's consent by a circle of admiring friends. Maud had been carried to the apartments occupied by her sister in the same hotel,

two days before. On the day of the concert she had walked about her room a little, and she was now lying on a couch behind the scenes, sustaining her husband through this trying ordeal by her invisible presence. Her dream of being present at his triumph was thus realized.

And it was an unparalleled triumph. Never had Stenio played with such consummate skill and power. He was like one inspired, and the enthusiastic admiration of his audience increased until it verged upon positive frenzy.

In her room behind the stage, Maud, alone with her sister, listened with breathless eagerness. The first few notes seemed to stifle her, and her respiration was so labored that her sister became much alarmed; but gradually this unpleasant sensation passed away, and a heavenly calm took its place. In fact, she seemed to gather fresh strength from the flood of melody that enveloped her.

The past three years reappeared before her as if in a mirage, evoked by Stenio's magical bow. Each air that he played marked an epoch in her life. She was again in the Queen's drawing-room, where she had met Marackzy for the first time; then, in the garden of the old mansion in Grosvenor Square, where Stenio had walked with her on summer evenings and where he had first told her of his love. It seemed to her that she could still inhale the sweet odor of the blooming lilies. Daisy came running toward them, and she had no time to answer him then. Now, she was once more in the old Irish castle, whither Stenio came, and she could not help following him.

What delightful, yet sorrowful years they had been, full of love and remorse, and triumphs and humility! How gladly she would have sacrificed all her blessings for one word of forgiveness from her father! And yet how brilliant had been her triumph! Kings and princes had lavished flattering words upon her, and under the gaslight, amid rare flowers and the plaudits of an admiring crowd, the wonderful violin sang on.

At last, the scene changed again, and everything became veiled in gloom. In a costly cradle, a frail, wan child lay dying, in spite of prayers and tears and tender care. She bent over him and tried to reanimate him with her own breath. Vain effort! Even in the caressing arms that clasped him close, the poor little thing grew colder and paler, and soon all was over.

All at once, it seemed to her that the heavens opened, and that her child was smilingly extending his arms to her. He called her, too; she recognized the childish voice, and felt that she had only to make a slight effort to lift herself from earth and join him. And yet, some irresistible power seemed to deter her. Was it the magical charm of Stenio's violin which she heard resounding sweetly and plaintively in the distance, and which seemed to say: "Would you leave the husband who adores you? Wait until he can depart with you to those blissful realms where suffering and sorrow are unknown, and where love will reign supreme through all eternity!"

Thus, divided between her affection for her husband and for her child, Maud hesitated, a prey to agony indescribable. The struggle seemed so real that she could not repress a cry of anguish. This aroused her from her terrible dream, and, seeing her sister beside her, she clutched her arm with the despairing grasp of a drowning man.

"Maud, Maud! how pale you are!" exclaimed Daisy. "What is it, dear? Are you suffering?"

"No, but I feel that I am about to leave you. I saw my dear little boy beckoning to me just now. The hour of parting has come! Stenio, too, seems to know it. Listen to what he is playing."

It was "The Song of the Swan," and, even in this moment of mortal anguish, Maud listened intently to the plaintive strains that were her funeral knell.

"Shall I call Stenio?" asked Daisy, greatly alarmed.

"No, no, let me hear it to the end."

A look of ecstasy shone in her eyes, as she murmured softly, "Oh, if I could die listening to him!"

"Maud, darling!" she exclaimed a moment later.

The dying woman clung to her sister's shoulder, and gasped, in an altered voice:

"But oh, the agony of leaving him! How I love him, and how terribly he will suffer!"

Daisy, in her terror, started for the door, but Maud held her back with a feeble but tenacious grasp. Just then a frantic outburst of applause rent the air. Handkerchiefs were waved wildly, frenzied cheers rang out, and high above the tumult hundreds of voices could be heard shouting, "Marackzy! Marackzy!"

Maud's sunken eyes sparkled with delight, and a proud smile illumined her wan features. With an almost superhuman effort, she raised herself up and held out her hands to her husband as he entered the room, loaded with flowers. Falling upon his knees, he placed the wreaths and bouquets on his wife's couch, as if offering all his fame and glory as a tribute to her. She still had strength enough left to stroke his face fondly, and bend down to kiss him. As she did so, Stenio heard her softly whisper the word "happy," and felt a light breath flit across his face.

Then the great musician uttered a shriek of anguish that resounded high above the plaudits of his admirers, for, in this moment of intoxicating triumph, his loved one had breathed her last.

CHAPTER VIII.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, two days afterward, Lord Mellivan's yacht, heavily draped in black, put out to sea. In the cabin, where Stenio had promised to restore Maud to her father, her sister and her faithful old governess were weeping bitterly over a flower-decked bier.

As the yacht crossed the bar, a small boat put out from the shore and followed the vessel. Its only occupants were two men, one a fisherman who plied his oars vigorously, for not a breath of air was stirring, and the other a gentleman dressed in black, who sat

motionless in the stern, with his head resting on his hand. A murmur ran through the crowd assembled at the foot of the light-house; and the name "Marackzy" passed from lip to lip. Every man present bared his head respectfully.

But Stenio seemed completely oblivious to his surroundings. His gaze was riveted upon the yacht which was bearing away all that he held dear on earth. Gradually the distance between the yacht and the boat widened, until the vessel, as it receded in the distance, looked like some great sea-bird with wings outspread for flight, and Marackzy, as if to see better, rose from his seat and stood upright, with his violin in his hand.

With head uncovered, and the immensity of ocean around him, he began to play as if he believed his dead wife could still hear him. The air was so still that the notes could be distinctly heard on the shore, as "The Song of the Swan" ascended toward Heaven, pure as an infant's prayer. Never was a more heart-rending farewell heard upon earth. It was not the violin that wept and wailed in mortal anguish, but Stenio's heart.

The yacht had disappeared from sight now; only the smoke from her funnels was dimly visible on the distant horizon. The sailor rowed with all his might. Seen from the shore, the boat seemed only a tiny black speck on the watery expanse, but still Stenio played on. At last, even the smoke vanished from sight, and the music died away in a wild, despairing sob.

The fisherman turned his head in surprise. The stern of the boat was empty, and no other human being was visible on the face of the waters. The horrified man uttered a loud cry for help, but there was no response, and, after a while, he rowed slowly back to the shore.

Stenio's body was never recovered. Some kindly current had doubtless borne the great musician to the blue grottoes below, where, amid the profound silence of the depths of ocean, the sirens sing of eternal happiness beyond.

One does not find every day a good, old-fashioned Indian story, but here is one from the *Yankee Blade*. It has the true, familiar ring, and is even more harrowing and exciting than most of its kind. It is from the pen of Emma Howard Wight, and it has enough of an historical setting to give it the needed air of truth. Perhaps it is true. Did not the supplies reach our heroic Arctic sufferers in the nick of time? In spite of Mr. Howells, can you not in your own experience recall many a catastrophe—or the opposite—which only a hair's-breadth, as it were, has averted? *Such things do happen.*

THE DUMB CAPTIVE

In the year 1734, Joist Hite with his wife and two boys, aged fourteen and twelve years, removed from Pennsylvania to the valley of Virginia, which was then beginning to be settled. He, with several other families, made a settlement on the North Branch of the Shenandoah river, where the town of Woodstock now stands, or rather, twelve miles south of it, to be more precise. It was a spot rather out of the range of the Indians, and the little settlement grew rapidly, being exempt from the attacks and devastations from which the other settlements suffered.

One morning, the sons of Hite, with a boy-companion, went to pick berries. Aaron Hite, the elder, was strong and large, with dark hair and skin, high cheek-bones, and straight black hair; Peter, the younger of the brothers, was small, blue-eyed, fair-skinned, and golden-haired. The boys had wandered some distance from the settlement before they discovered any berries. At length, they came upon them in large quantities and were busily filling their baskets, when suddenly Peter uttered a cry of terror, and, looking up, the other two perceived a band of Indians coming over the brow of the hill. The Indians had not yet perceived them, and the Hite boys' companion promptly took to his heels and in a few moments was out of sight. Aaron

was about to follow his example, but paused when he saw his brother stand motionless.

"Come on, Peter," he urged desperately, "run and we can escape them." But Peter, who was a timid boy, was so paralyzed with fright that he was totally unable to move, and stood trembling and helpless, his fair face white to his quivering lips. As soon as Aaron perceived this, he made no further attempt to save himself, and the next moment the Indians had seen them and, with yells, came swooping down upon them. The boys were at once captured and bound together, and the Indians continued their march.

Aaron was a brave boy and thought but little of his own danger; all his anxiety was for his brother, whose terror was pitiful, and whom he soon saw the Indians regarded with less favor than himself. With their hatred of the white man, Peter's fair skin, blue eyes, and golden hair roused their worst passions. They urged him on with kicks and blows which made Aaron's heart beat wildly with pain and rage. He tried to support Peter, as well as their bonds and his own exhausted condition would permit, but, at last, the boy sank down upon the ground.

"It's no use, Aaron," he faltered, "I can't go another step, not if they kill me for it."

"Do try, Peter," cried Aaron desperately. "I don't know what they may do if you can't keep up."

"Indeed, indeed, I can't," reiterated the boy, bursting into tears, and Aaron saw that he was utterly incapable of making even an effort.

Even the brutal urging of the Indians had no effect, and, when they saw that, they came to a halt and began talking together. Aaron could not, of course, understand what they said, but his heart sank as he watched them.

Finally, after talking and gesticulating for about ten minutes, they evidently arrived at a decision, and two of them came up to the boys, cut the cords which bound them together, and lifted Peter from the ground. Aaron struggled desperately to free his arms and spring

at the throat of the Indian who held his brother, but some of the others bound his feet together and threw him helpless on the ground.

In the mean time, Peter had been carried and lashed to a tree, his quivering sobs of terror piercing Aaron's heart as he lay in sickening fear and dread. He was not left long in suspense; the Indians all drew aside with the exception of one who took his stand directly in front of Peter at a few yards' distance, with bow and arrow in hand. The boy's sobs froze into long deep sighs, while his blue eyes, dilated with agonized terror, gazed wildly at his executioner. Aaron, forgetful that they could not understand him, cried out to them to have pity, to kill him and spare his brother, but they took no notice of him. The Indian raised his bow, the arrow whizzed through the air and the next moment had buried itself in the boy's heart. Aaron saw the fair head droop, uttered a cry of despair, and then knew no more.

When he came to himself, he was lying on some skins in a sort of a hut built of the branches of trees, and a hideous old Indian hag was sitting beside him. He attempted to sit up, but fell back, feeling strangely weak and faint. The old hag looked at him with her bleared eyes for a moment, then, rising, she brought him some dark-looking liquid in a tin cup and motioned for him to drink it. Aaron did so; it was very bitter and nauseating, but in a very few minutes he felt invigorated from it.

She then hobbled out and, in a little while, returned with a venerable-looking old man who, to Aaron's surprise, addressed him in broken English. He proceeded to inform Aaron that he had been very ill for several weeks, with fever, but that he would soon be all right again. He added that they intended to make him one of themselves. Aaron opened his lips to protest, but no words came, and he found to his terror that he could not make a sound. The old Indian watched him gravely and attentively for a few moments, and then told him that the fever had taken away his tongue.

It was true. The shock and pain of seeing his brother murdered, and the fever which followed, had deprived Aaron of speech; he was dumb. When he realized this, he threw himself back on his bed of skins, and wept bitterly. He submitted in a stupor of despair while the old Indian divested him of his clothing and proceeded to dye his skin all over a dark brown. Then he put on him the Indian dress. When all was finished, he stood off and regarded Aaron with the greatest satisfaction. He then carried him outside, and all the Indians of the settlement came up and rubbed their noses against Aaron's, uttering guttural sounds which were meant to express their friendliness.

One day, after he had grown stronger, Aaron went down to a mountain stream and looked at his reflection within it. With a throb of despair he found that he had been metamorphosed into an Indian. His straight, black hair had grown long, and with his colored skin, high cheek-bones, and Indian dress, it was impossible to distinguish him from one. The power to proclaim his identity was gone. He was doubly a prisoner, hopelessly bound.

Sadly he went back; there was nothing to do but to accept his fate. After a little while, he became more reconciled. There was something fascinating in the bold, free Indian life to a brave, strong boy, but his heart never ceased to yearn for the ones at home, and, kind though the Indians were to him, he could not forget that they were the murderers of his young brother. He was allowed perfect freedom, for the Indians knew how impossible it was for him to make any use of that freedom toward returning to his people. Should he even succeed in reaching a white settlement, it would be impossible for him to proclaim who he was, and, the white man and the Indian being at deadly enmity, he would probably have been shot.

After a time, the Indians grew to believe that he was perfectly contented with them and had no desire to return to his people. He accompanied them on hunting expeditions, and soon became very expert with the bow

and arrow, which pleased his dark companions extremely. They never took him, however, when engaged in making a raid upon a white settlement or in any other outrages upon the whites. From these expeditions they often returned with prisoners whom they tortured to death. At these times Aaron would creep away, and, throwing himself on the ground, shut his ears to the moans and cries of the poor victims.

Sometimes, at night, he would be placed with other Indians to watch over the prisoners, and how intensely he longed to cut the bonds and set the poor victims free. But his fellow-watchers were too vigilant.

Three years passed away. Aaron was a big, strong fellow of seventeen, an expert huntsman, and high in favor with the entire tribe. One day the Indians all gathered round their chief in consultation. Aaron watched them with a sickening heart. He knew only too well that these consultations meant some mischief against the whites.

He thoroughly understood the language of the tribe by this time, and he stood near and listened to them with an aching heart. They were planning a raid upon a white settlement, and Aaron's pain deepened into infinite horror as it dawned upon him that, from the situation of the settlement, it must be the very one where his parents lived. He prayed silently that Heaven would help him to save them from the awful fate with which they were threatened.

The band of Indians chosen for the expedition were to set out that night, and, by signs, Aaron signified his desire to accompany them. The permission was readily granted, for the Indians had no suspicion that the boys they had captured three years before belonged to the settlement they intended to raid. It was toward evening of the second day that they reached their destination. They hid themselves on the outskirts of the settlement in a thick wood, there to wait until night came, when they would steal down upon the unsuspecting people and perhaps murder them as they slept.

Aaron looked with miserable, yearning eyes from

the shelter of the wood toward the settlement. It had grown in those three years, but he could plainly distinguish his father's house, and the tears filled his eyes while he prayed Heaven's help to save the family. After a little, he saw two young girls coming toward the wood. He watched them and saw they were going for some cattle which were in a field on the other side of the wood. A sudden hope leaped in his heart. If he could only manage to be seen by the girls, they would give the alarm and put the men of the settlement on their guard.

He went back, got his bow and arrow, and signed to the Indians that he was going to look for game. They made no objection. Aaron hurried off in the direction taken by the girls. They were returning with the cows. He crouched down and waited. They came along talking gayly to each other. Aaron suddenly sprang up and into their path. The girls shrieked and clung to each other. Aaron turned and dashed back into the wood and joined his companions. The Indians were busily engaged in preparing their food, and had heard nothing. Aaron breathed a fervent prayer of thanksgiving, and then looked anxiously toward the settlement, but it had grown too dark for him to distinguish anything save the lights which had begun to glow in the windows.

The hours passed; some of the Indians watched while the others slept. When the last light had gone out in the settlement, the sleepers were aroused and the entire band began to creep on all-fours toward it. Aaron crept in their midst, trembling in every limb with agony and suspense. The entire settlement appeared wrapped in profound slumber. Had they failed to take alarm, and must he see his own parents slaughtered before his eyes? Oh, for the power to shout aloud and warn those sleepers that death was creeping stealthily upon them!

When the Indians were within a few feet of the settlement, they suddenly sprang erect and made a dash at the first house, which was that of Joist Hite. As they

did so, the report of a gun broke the profound stillness, and a bullet whizzed through the air, laying one of their number low. A fervent thanksgiving welled through Aaron's heart, while the Indians, finding themselves discovered and at a disadvantage, dashed away, followed by a storm of bullets which brought not a few to the ground.

Aaron alone remained motionless, heedless of the bullets which flew on all sides of him. The next moment the settlers came swarming out of the houses, and he was surrounded and taken prisoner. They bound his hands and led him into his father's house. Aaron's heart beat quickly and his lips quivered as he looked once more upon the faces of his parents—those dear faces, so grief-worn and aged since he had last looked upon them.

But his heart sank, and, for the first time, he realized his position, as his father came close to him, and, looking into his face with bitter hatred burning in his eyes, said:

"Friends, you intend, of course, to kill this Indian. I ask you that you let my hand be the one to land a bullet in his heart."

"Yes, yes," was the unanimous answer.

But his wife came forward, and laid her hand on his arm.

"Dear," she said, and her gentle, well-remembered tones thrilled to Aaron's heart, "have a little mercy! He is so young! Do not stain your hands with his blood."

The tears were trickling down Aaron's cheeks.

"Ah, my dear, dear mother," he thought, "you little think you are pleading for the life of your own child."

But Joist Hite was deaf to her entreaties.

"Mercy!" he cried fiercely. "How can you talk about mercy when you think of your murdered children!—one lashed to a tree with an arrow in his heart, and the other?—Only Heaven and his fiendish murderers know where his body lies."

His wife drew back with a cry of bitter pain while Hite turned to the men.

"Come, my friends, we will lash him to a tree and put a bullet in his black heart as they put an arrow in the heart of my poor boy."

The others eagerly acquiesced and they led him out, while Aaron's eyes were fixed to the last upon the pale, worn face of his mother, down which the tears were slowly falling. He was more than willing to have sacrificed his life to save them, but it was hard that he must die by the hand of his own father. A great fire was lighted, and then Aaron was lashed to a tree. He was ready to meet death bravely with a last prayer that his father's life might never be shadowed by the knowledge of what he had done.

At length, all was ready, and Hite, pistol in hand, took up his position in front of Aaron. His eyes, burning with hatred, met the pleading anguished ones of the supposed Indian boy, and, for an instant, he paused. The next moment he raised the pistol with a steady hand. Aaron made one last mighty effort to break the bonds of silence which had held him for three long years,—an effort which seemed almost to break his heart-strings, and an instant later, as Hite's finger touched the trigger, a cry of "Father! father!" rang out upon the air.

When Aaron recovered from the long insensibility that followed, he found himself lying with his head on his mother's breast and his father sobbing over him. And he was no longer dumb.

The love of her doll is the strongest instinct of the infant feminine breast, and is not to be lightly tampered with. It has been employed as a motive in the tales of all European nations; but an East Indian setting is a very modern thing in doll-stories, and has been most effectively employed in this striking sketch from *Macmillan's Magazine*.

NUTTIA.

"THE case of Mussumat* Nuttia being without heirs," droned the court inspector.

"Bring her in."

"She is already in the presence. If the protector of the poor will rise somewhat—at the other side of the table, Huzoor!—beside the yellow-trousered legs of the guardian of peace—that is Mussumat Nuttia."

A child of some three years of age, with a string of big blue beads round her neck—a child who had evidently had a very satisfying meal, and who was even now preserving its contour by half a yard of sugar-cane—stared gravely back at the assistant magistrate's face.

"She has no heirs of any kind?" he asked.

"None, Huzoor! Her mother was of the Harni tribe, working harvests in Bhamaniwallah-khurd. There the misfortune of being eaten by a snake came upon her by the grace of God. Mussumat Nuttia therefore remains——"

"O guardian of the poor!" said two voices in unison, as two tall, bearded figures, swathed in whitish-brown draperies, pressed a step forward with outstretched petitioning hands. They had been awaiting this crisis all day long, with that mixture of tenacity and indifference which is seen on most faces in an East Indian court.

"Give her in charge of the headmen of the village; they are responsible."

"Shelter of the world! 'tis falsely represented. The woman was a vagrant, a——"

* A title of courtesy equivalent to our "mistress."

"Is the order written? Then bring the next case."

One flourish of a pen, and Mussumat Nuttia became a village legacy; the only immediate result being that, having sucked one end of her sugar-cane dry, she began methodically on the other. Half an hour afterward, mounted on a white pony with pink eyes and a dyed pink tail to match, she was on her way to the cluster of reed huts dignified by the name of Bhamaniwallah-khurd, or Little Bhamaniwallah. Big Bhamaniwallah lay a full mile to the northward, secured against mid-summer floods by the high bank which stretched like a mud wall right across the Punjab plain, from the skirts of the hills to the great meeting of the five waters of Mittankote. But Little Bhamaniwallah lay in the lap of the river, and so Bahadur and Boota and Jodha and all the grave big-bearded Dogas who fed their herds of cattle on the low ground and speculated in the cultivation of sand banks, lived with their loins girded, ready to shift house with the shifting of the river. That was why the huts were made of reeds; that was why the women of the village clanked about in solid silver jewelry, turning their persons into secure savings banks.

Mussumat Jewun Bahadar, the headman's wife, wore bracelets like manacles, and a perfect yoke of a necklet, as she patted out the dough cakes and expostulated shrilly at the introduction of a new mouth into the family, when Nuttia, fast asleep, was lifted from the pony and put down in the warm sand by the door.

"She belongs to the village," replied the elders, wagging their beards. "God knows what my lords desire with the Harni brat, but if they ask for her, she must be forthcoming; ay! and fat. They like people to grow fat, even in their jail-khanas."

So Nuttia grew fat; she would have grown fat, even had the fear of my lords not been before the simple villagers' eyes; for, despite her tender years, she was eminently fitted to take care of herself. She had an instinct as to the houses where good things were being prepared, and her chubby little hand, imperiously stretched out for a portion, was seldom sent away

empty. Indeed, to tell the sober truth, Nuttia was not to be gainsaid as to her own hunger.

"My stomach is bigger than that, grandmother!" she would say confidently if the alms appeared to her inadequate, and neither cuffs nor neglect altered her conviction. She never cried, and the little fat hand, silently demanding more, came back again and again after every rebuff till she felt herself in a condition to seek some warm sunny corner and curl round to sleep. She lived for the most part with the yelping, slouching village dogs, following them, as the nights grew chill, to the smouldering brick kilns, where she fed the little dust-colored puppies with anything above or beneath her own appetite.

As she outgrew childhood's vestment of curves and dimples, some one gave her an old rag of a petticoat. Perhaps the acquisition of clothes followed, as in ancient days, a fall from grace; certain it was that Nuttia in a garment was a far less estimable member of society than Nuttia without one. To begin with, it afforded opportunity for the display of many mortal sins. Vainglory in her own appearance, deceit in attempting to palm the solitary prize off on the world as a various and complete wardrobe, and dishonesty flagrant and unabashed; for, once provided with a convenient receptacle for acquired trifles, Nuttia took to stealing as naturally as a puppy steals bones.

Then, once having recognized the pleasures of possession, she fought furiously against any infringement of her rights. A boy twice her size went yelling home to his parents on her first resort to brute force, consequent on the discovery of a potsherd tied to her favorite puppy's tail. This victory proving unfortunate for the peace of the village, the headmen awoke to the necessity for training up their legacy in the paths of virtue. So persistent pummeling was resorted to, with the happiest effect. Nuttia stole and fought no more; she retired with dignity from a society which failed to appreciate her, and took to the wilderness instead. At earliest dawn, after her begging round was over, she

would wander out from the thorn enclosures to the world; a kaleidoscopic world, where fields ripened golden crops one year, and the next brought the red brown river wrinkling and dimpling in swift current; where big, brand-new continents rose up before eager eyes, and clothed themselves in green herbs and creeping things innumerable. If you wished to watch the birds, or the palm squirrels, or the jerboa rats, you had to face northward and skirt the high bank. So much of Dame Nature's ways, and a vast deal more, Mussumat Nuttia learned ere the setting sun and hunger drove her back to the brick-kilns, and the never-failing meals of scraps—never-failing, because the lords of the universe liked people to be fat, and the headmen were responsible for their legacy's condition.

So, when an assistant magistrate—indefinite because of the constant changes which apparently form part of western policy—included the Bhamaniwallahs in his winter tour of inspection, a punchaiyut, or council of five, decided that it was the duty of the village to provide Nuttia with a veil, in case she should be haled to the Presence: and two yards of Manchester muslin were purchased from the reserved funds of the village, and handed over to the child with many wise saws on the general advisibility of decency. Nuttia's delight for the first five minutes was exhilarating, and sent the headmen back to other duties with a glow of self-satisfaction on their solemn faces. Then she folded the veil up quite square, sat down on it, and meditated on the various uses to which it could be put.

The result may be told briefly. Two days afterward the assistant magistrate, being a keen sportsman, was crawling on his stomach to a certain long low pool much frequented by teal and mallard. In the rear, gleaming white through the caper bushes, showed the usual cloud of witnesses, filled with patient amazement at this unnecessary display of energy; yet for all that counting shrewdly on the good temper likely to result from good sport. So much so that the sudden uprising into bad language of the Huzoor sent them forward prodigal of

apology, but the sight that met their eyes dried up the fountain of excuse. Nuttia, stark naked, stood knee-deep in the very centre of the pool, catching small fry with a bag-net ingeniously constructed out of the Manchester veil.

The punchaiyut sat again to agree that a child who could not only destroy the sport of the guardian of the poor, but could also drag the village honor through the mud, despite munificent inducements toward decency, must be possessed of a devil. So Nuttia was solemnly censed with red pepper and turmeric, until her yells and struggles were deemed sufficient to denote a casting out of the evil spirit. It is not in the slow-brained, calm-hearted peasant of India to be unkind to children, and so, when the function was over, Mussumat Jewun and the other deep-chested, shrill-voiced women comforted the victim with sweetmeats and the assurance that she would be ever so much better behaved in the future.

Nuttia eyed them suspiciously, but ate her sweetmeats. This incident did not increase her confidence in humanity; on the other hand, the attitude of the brute creation was a sore disappointment to her. She might have had a heart instinct with greed of capture and sudden death, instead of that dim desire of companionship, for all the notice taken by the birds and the squirrels and the rats of her outstretched handful of crumbs. She would sit for long hours silent as a little bronze image set in the sunshiny sand; then, in a rage, she would fling the crumbs at the timid creatures, and go home to the dogs and the buffaloes. They, at least, were not afraid of her, but then they were afraid of nobody, and Nuttia wanted something of her very own.

One day she found it. It was only an old bed-leg, but to the eye of faith an incarnation. For the leg of an Indian bed is not unlike a huge ninepin, and even a western imagination can detect the embryo likeness between a ninepin and the human form divine. Man has a head; so has a ninepin; and if humanity is to wear petticoats, one solid leg is quite as good as two; nay

better, since it stands more firmly. Arms were of course wanting, but the holes ready cut in the oval centre for the insertion of the bed-frame formed admirable sockets for two straight pieces of bamboo. At this stage Nuttia's treasure presented the appearance of a sign-post; but the passion of creation was on the child, and a few hours afterward something comically, yet pitifully, like the Legacy herself stared back at her from that humble studio among the dirt heaps—a shag of goat's hair glued on with prickly pear juice, two lovely black eyes drawn with Mussumat Jewun's kohl pencil, a few blue beads, a scanty petticoat and veil filched from the child's own garments.

Nuttia, inspired by the recollection of a tinsel-decorated bride in Big Bhamaniwallah, called her creature Sirdar Begum on the spot. Then she hid her away in a tussock of tiger-grass beyond the enclosures, and strove to go her evening round as though nothing had happened. Yet it was as if an angel from heaven had stepped down to take her by the hand. Henceforward she was never to be alone. All through the silent, sunny days, as she watched the big black buffaloes grazing on the muddy flats—for Nuttia was advanced to the dignity of a herd-girl by this time—Sirdar Begum was with her as guide, counsellor, and friend. Whether the doll fared best with a heart's whole devotion poured out on her wooden head, or whether Nuttia's part in giving was more blessed, need not be considered, the result to both being a steady grin on a broad, round face. But there was another result also; Nuttia began to develop a taste for pure virtue. Perhaps it was the necessity of posing before Sirdar Begum as infallible, joined to the desire of keeping that young person's conduct up to an heroic pitch, which caused the sudden rise in principle. At all events the Legacy's cattle became renowned as steady milkers, and the amount of butter she managed to twirl out of the sour curds satisfied even Mussumat Jewun's demands; whereupon the other herders looked at her askance, and muttered an Indian equivalent of seven devils. Then the necessity for

amusing the doll led Nuttia into lingering round the little knots of story-tellers, who sat far on into the night, discoursing of jins and ghouls, of faithful lovers, virtuous maidens, and the beauties of holiness. Down on the edge of the big stream, with all the water sliding by, Nuttia rehearsed all these wonders to her adored bed-leg until, falling in love with righteousness, she took to telling the truth.

It was a fatal mistake in a cattle-lifting district, and Bhamaniwallah-khurd lay in the very centre of that maze of tamarisk jungle, quicksand, and stream, which forms the cattle-thief's best refuge. So Bahadur, and Johda, and Boots, together with many another honest man, made a steady income by levying blackmail on those who sought safety within their boundaries; and this without in any way endangering their own reputations. All that had to be done was to obliterate strange tracks by sending their own droves in the same direction, and thereafter to keep silence. And every baby in the Bhamaniwallahs knew that hoof-prints were not a legitimate subject of conversation—all save Nuttia, and she—as luck would have it—was a herd-girl! They tried beating this sixth sense into her, but it was no use, and so, whenever the silver-fringed turban, white cotton gloves and clanking sword of the native inspector of police were expected in the village, they used to send the Legacy away to the back of beyond—right away to the Luckimpura island maybe, to reach which she had to hold on to the biggest buffalo's tail, and so, with Sirdar Begum tied securely to its horns, and her own little black head bobbing up and down in its wake, the trio would cross the narrow stream and spread themselves out to dry on the hot sand. Nuttia took a great fancy to the island, and many a time, when she might have driven the herds to nearer pastures, preferred the long, low stretches of Luckimpura, where a flush of green lingered even in the droughts of April.

But even there on one very hot day scarcely a blade was to be found, and Nuttia, careful of her beasts and noting the lowness of the river, gathered them around

her with the herdsman's cry and drove them to the further brink, intending to take them to a smaller island beyond. To her surprise they stood knee deep in the water, immovable, impassive, noses in air, with long curled horns lying on their necks.

The Legacy shaded her eyes to see more clearly. Nothing was to be seen but the swift, shallow stream, the level sand, and gleams of water stretching away to the horizon. Something had frightened them—but what? She gave up the puzzle, and, with Sirdar Begum bolt upright before her, sat on a snag, dangling her feet over the stream for the sake of the cool air which seemed to rise from the river.

The buffaloes roamed restlessly about, disturbed doubtless by the clouds of flies. The sun beat down ineffectually on the doll's fuzzy head, but it pierced Nuttia's thick pate, making her nod drowsily. Her voice recounting the thrilling adventures of brave Bhopaluchi died away into a sigh of sleep. So there was nothing left but the doll's wide unwinking eyes to keep watch over the world.

What was that? Something cold, icy cold! Nuttia woke with a start. One brown heel had touched the water; she looked down at it, then swiftly around her. The buffaloes huddled by the ford had ceased to graze, and a quiver of light greeted her glance at the purple horizon. She sprang to her feet and, breaking off a root from the snag, held it to the dimpling water. The next instant a scared face looked at the horizon once more. The river was rising fast, rising as she had never seen it rise before. Yet in past years she had witnessed many a flood; floods that had swept away much of the arable land and driven the villagers to till new soil thrown up nearer the high bank. Ay! and driven many of them to seek new homes beside the new fields, until Bhamaniwallah-khurd had dwindled away to a few houses, a very few, and these on that hot April day deserted for the most part, since all the able-bodied men and women were away at the harvest. Even the herders had driven their cattle northward, hop-

ing to come in for some of the lively bustle of the fields. There were only Nuttia on the Luckimpura island and Mussumat Jewun, with her new baby and the old hag who nursed her, in the reed huts. All this came to the girl's memory as the long, low cry of the herd rose on the hot air, and with Sirdar Begum close clasped in her veil she drove the big buffalo Moti into the stream. How cold the water was; cold as the snows from which it came! The Legacy had not lived in the lap of the river for so long without learning something of its ways. She knew of the frost-bound glaciers whence it flowed; and of the disastrous floods which follow, beneath a cloudless sky, on unusual heat or unusual rain in those mountain fastnesses. The coming storm, whose arch of cloud, shimmering with sheet lightning, had crept beyond the line of purple haze, was nothing; that was not the nightmare of the river folk.

She stood for a moment when dry land was reached, hesitating whether to strike straight for the high bank or make for the village lying a mile distant. Some vague instinct of showing Sirdar Begum she was not afraid made her choose the latter course, though most of the herd refused to follow her decision and broke away. She collected her few remaining favorites, and with cheerful cries plunged into the tamarisk jungle. Here, shut out from sight, save of the yielding bushes, her thoughts went far ahead. What if the old nullah between the reed huts and the rising ground were to fill? What if the low levels between that rising ground and the high bank were to flood? And every one beyond in the yellow corn, except Mai Jewun and the people who did not count—babies and old women and the crippled girl in the far hut! Only herself and Sirdar Begum to be brave, for Mai Jewun was sick.

"Wake up! Wake up! Mai Jewun! the floods are out!" broke in on the new-born baby's wail as Nuttia's broad scared face shut out the sunlight from the door.

"Go away, unlucky daughter of a bad mother," grumbled Jewun drowsily. "Dost wish to cast thy evil eye on my heart's delight? Go, I say."

"Yea! go!" grumbled the old nurse, cracking her fingers. "Sure some devil possesseth thee to tell truth or lies at thy own pleasure."

But the crippled girl spinning in the far hut had heard the flying feet, caught the excited cry, and now, crawling on her knees to the door, threw up her hands and shrieked aloud.

The water stood ankle-deep among the tamarisk roots, and from its still pool tiny tongues licked their way along the dry sand.

"The flood! the flood!" The unavailing cry rang out as the women huddled together helplessly.

"Mai Jewun! there is time," came the Legacy's eager voice. "Put the baby down, and help. I saw them do it at Luckimpura that time they took the cattle over the deep stream, and Bahadur beat me for seeing it. Quick! quick!"

Simple enough, yet in its very simplicity lay their only chance to escape. A string-woven bed buoyed up with the bundles of reeds cut ready for rethatching, and on this frail raft four people—nay, five! for first of all, with jealous care, Nuttia placed her beloved Sirdar Begum in safety, wrapping her up in the clothes she discarded in favor of free nakedness.

Quick! Quick! if the rising ground is to be gained and the levels beyond forded ere the water is too deep! Moti and a companion, yoked by plough-ropes to the bed, wade knee-deep, hock-deep, into the stream, and now with the old, cheerful cry Nuttia, clinging to their tails, and so guiding them, urges the beasts deeper still. The stream swirls past, holding them with it, though they breast it bravely. A log, long stranded in some shallow, dances past, shaving the raft by an inch. Then an alligator swept from its moorings, and casting eyes on Nuttia's brown legs, makes the beasts plunge madly. A rope breaks, the churned water sweeps over the women, the end is near—when another frantic struggle leaves Moti alone to her task. The high, childish voice calling on her favorite's courage rises again and again; but the others, cowed into silence, clutch to-

gether with hid faces, till a fresh plunge loosens their tongues once more. It is Moti finding foothold, and they are safe—so far.

"Quick! Mai Jewun," cries Nuttia, as her companions stand looking fearfully over the waste of shallows before them. She knows from the narrowness of the ridge they have reached that time is precious. "We must wade while we can, saving Moti for the streams. Take up the baby, and I——"

Her hands, busy on the bed, stilled themselves—her face grew gray—she turned on them like a fury. "Sirdar Begum! I put her there—where is Sirdar Begum?"

"That bed-leg!" shrilled the mother, tucking up her petticoats for greater freedom. "There was no room, and Heart's Delight was cold. Bah! wood floats."

"Hull-lal-lal-a-lalla-la!" The herdsman's cry was the only answer. Moti has faced the flood again, but this time with a light load, for the baby nestling amid Nuttia's clothes is the only occupant of the frail raft.

"My son! My son! Light of mine eyes! Core of my heart! Come back! Come back!"

But the little black head drifting down stream behind the big one never turned from its set purpose. Wood floated, and so might babies. Why not?

Why not, indeed! But as a matter of fact Mai Jewun was right. A dilapidated bed-leg was picked up on a sand-bank miles away when the floods subsided, and Moti joined the herd next day to chew the cud of her reflections contentedly. But the Village Legacy and Heart's Delight remained somewhere seeking for something. That something doubtless which had turned the bed-leg into Sirdar Begum.

ROMANCE.

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AN EXPRESS IDYLL . . . . . *Arthur Griffiths*
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Miss Mitford is little more than a name to the story-readers of our time, but the quiet charm and the lack of machinery in her simple plots, and the old-fashioned primness of the style in which she wrote,—a really excellent style for her purposes,—are well worth recalling. She did for village life in her generation something like what Miss Wilkins has done for that of New England in our own. Here is one of her prettiest sketches.

THE ODD BOY.

Two or three winters ago, our little village had the good fortune to have its curiosity excited by the sudden appearance of a lovely and elegant young woman, as an inmate in the house of Mr. Martin, a respectable farmer in the place. The pleasure of talking over a newcomer in a country village, which, much as I love country villages, does, I confess, occasionally labor under a stagnation of topics, must not be lightly estimated. In the present instance the enjoyment was greatly increased by the opportune moment at which it occurred, just before Christmas, so that conjecture was happily afloat in all the parties of that merry time, enlivened the tea-tables and gave zest and animation to the supper. There was, too, a slight shade of mystery, a difficulty at coming at the truth, which made the subject unusually poignant. Talk her over as they might, nobody knew anything certain of the incognita, or her story; nobody could tell who she was, or whence she came. Mrs. Martin, to whom her neighbors were on a sudden most politely attentive in the way of calls and invitations, said nothing more than that Miss Neville was a young lady who had come to lodge at Kinlay-end; and, except at church, Miss Neville was invisible. Nobody could tell what to make of her.

Her beauty was, however, no questionable matter. All the parish agreed on that point. She was in deep mourning, which set off advantageously a tall and full,

yet easy and elastic figure, in whose carriage the vigor and firmness of youth and health seemed blended with the elegance of education and good company. Youth and health were the principal characteristics of her countenance. There was health in her bright hazel eyes, with their rich dark eye-lashes; health in the profusion of her glossy brown hair; health in her pure and brilliant complexion; health in her red lips, her white teeth, and the beautiful smile that displayed them; health in her very dimple. Her manners, as well as they could be judged of in passing to and from the church, leading one of the little Martins by the hand, and occasionally talking to him, seemed as graceful as her person, and as open as her countenance. All the village agreed that she was a lovely creature, and all the village wondered who she could be. It was a most animating puzzle.

There was, however, no mystery in the story of Grace Neville. She was the only child of an officer of rank, who fell in an early stage of the Peninsular war: her mother had survived him but a short time, and the little orphan had been reared in great tenderness and luxury by her maternal uncle, a kind, thoughtless, expensive man, speculating and sanguine, who, after exhausting a good fortune in vain attempts to realize a great one, sinking money successively in farming, in cotton-spinning, in paper-making, in a silk mill, and a mine, found himself one fair morning actually ruined, and died (such things have happened) of a broken heart; leaving poor Grace at three-and-twenty, with the habits and education of an heiress, almost totally destitute.

The poor girl found, as usual, plenty of comforters and advisers. Some recommended her to sink the little fortune she possessed in right of her father, in a school; some, to lay it by for old age, and go out for a governess; some hinted at the possibility of matrimony, advising, that at all events, so fine a young woman should try her fortune by visiting about amongst her friends for a year or two, and favored her with a husband-

hunting invitation accordingly. But Grace was too independent and too proud for a governess; too sick of schemes for a school; and the hint matrimonial had effectually prevented her from accepting any, even the most unsuspected, invitation. Besides, she said, and perhaps she thought, that she was weary of the world; so she wrote to Mrs. Martin, once her uncle's housekeeper, now the substantial wife of a substantial farmer, and came down to lodge with her in our secluded village.

Poor Grace, what a change! It was mid-winter; snowy, foggy, sleety, wet. Kinlay-end, an old manor-house, much dilapidated, stood, with its windows half-closed, a huge vine covering its front, and ivy climbing up the sides to the roof—the very image of chilliness and desolation. There was, indeed, one habitable wing, required and fitted up as an occasional sporting residence for the landlord; but those apartments were locked; and she lived like the rest of the family in the centre of the house, made up of great, low, dark rooms, with oaken panels, of long rambling passages, of interminable galleries, and broad, gusty staircases, up which you might drive a coach-and-six. Such was the prospect within doors; and without, mud! mud! mud! nothing but mud! Then the noises; wind, in all its varieties, combined with bats, rats, owls, pigs, cows, geese, ducks, turkeys, chickens, and children, in all varieties also; for besides the regular inhabitants of the farm-yard—biped and quadruped—Mrs. Martin had within doors sundry coops of poultry, two pet lambs, and four boys, from six years old downward, who were in some way or other exercising their voices all day long. Mrs. Martin, too, she whilom so soft-spoken and demure, had now found her scolding tongue, and was indeed, noted for that accomplishment all over the parish; the maid was saucy, and the farmer smoked.

Poor Grace Neville! what a trial! what a contrast! She tried to draw; tried to sing; tried to read; tried to work; and, above all, tried to be contented. But

nothing would do. The vainest endeavor of all was the last.

The only companionable person about the place was a slip-shod urchin, significantly termed "the odd boy"; an extra and supplementary domestic, whose department it is to help all the others, out of doors and in; to do all that they leave undone, and to bear the blame of everything that goes amiss. The personage in question, Dick Crosby by name, was a parish boy taken from the workhouse. He was, as nearly as could be guessed (for nobody took the trouble to be certain about his age), somewhere bordering on eleven; a long, lean, famished-looking boy, with a pale complexion, sharp, thin features, and sunburnt hair. His dress was usually a hat without a crown, a tattered round frock, stockings that scarcely covered his ankles, and shoes that hung on his feet by the middle like clogs, down at heel, and open at toe. Yet, underneath these rags, and through all his huffings and cuffings from master and mistress, carter and maid, the boy looked, and was, merry and contented; was even a sort of wag in his way; sturdy and independent in his opinions, and constant in his attachments. He had a pet sheep-dog (for amongst his numerous avocations he occasionally acted as under-shepherd), a spectral, ghastly-looking animal, with a huge white head and neck, and a gaunt black body. Mephistopheles might have put himself into such a shape. He had also a pet donkey, the raggedest brute upon the common, of which he was part owner, and for whose better maintenance he was sometimes accused of such petty larceny as may be comprised in stealing what no other creature would eat, refuse hay, frosty turnips, decayed cabbage leaves, and thistles from the hedge.

These two faithful followers had long shared Dick Crosby's affections between them; but from the first day of Miss Neville's appearance, the dog and the donkey found a rival. She happened to speak to him, and her look and voice won his heart at once and for ever. Never had high-born damsel in the days of

chivalry so devoted a page. He was at her command by night or by day; nay, "though she called another, Abra came." He would let nobody else clean her shoes, carry her clogs, or run her errands; was always at hand to open the gates and chase away the cows when she walked; forced upon her his own hoard of nuts; and scoured the country to get her the wintry nosegays which the mildness of the season permitted, sweet-scented coltsfoot, china-roses, laurustinus, and stocks.

It was not in Grace's nature to receive such proofs of attachment without paying them in kind. Dick would hardly have been her choice for a pet, but being so honestly and artlessly chosen by him, she soon began to return the compliment, and showered on him marks of her favor and protection; perhaps a little gratified, so mixed are human motives, to find that her patronage was still of consequence at Kinlay-end. Half-pence and sixpences, apples and gingerbread, flowed into Dick's pocket, and his outward man underwent a thorough transformation. He cast his rags, and for the first time in his life put on an entire suit of clothes. A proud boy was Dick that day. It is recorded that he passed an hour in alternate fits of looking in the glass and shouts of laughter. He laughed till he cried, for sheer happiness.

I have been thus particular in my account of Dick, because, in the first place, he was an old acquaintance of mine, a constant and promising attendant at the cricket-ground—his temperament being so mercurial, that even in his busiest days, when he seemed to have work enough upon his hands for ten boys, he would still make time for play; in the second, because I owe to him the great obligation of being known to his fair patroness. He had persuaded her, one dry afternoon, to go with him, and let him show her the dear cricket-ground; I happened to be passing the spot; and neither of us could ever exactly remember how he managed the matter, but the boy introduced us. He was an extraordinary master of the ceremonies, to be sure; but the

introduction was most effectually performed, and to our mutual surprise and pleasure we found ourselves acquainted. I have always thought it one of the highest compliments ever paid me, that Dick Crosby thought me worthy to be known to Miss Neville.

We were friends in five minutes. I found the promise of her lovely countenance amply redeemed by her character. She was frank, ardent and spirited, with a cultivated mind, and a sweet temper; not to have loved her would have been impossible; and she, besides the natural pleasure of talking to one who could understand and appreciate her, was delighted to come to a house where the mistress did not scold, or the master smoke; where there were neither pigs, chickens, nor children.

As spring advanced and the roads improved, we saw each other almost every day; the soft skies and mild breezes of April, and the profuse floweriness of hedgerow, wood, and field, gave a never-failing charm to our long rural walks. Grace was fond of wild-flowers, which her *protégé* Dick was assiduous in procuring. He had even sacrificed the vanity of sticking the first bunch of primroses in his Sunday hat to the pleasure of offering them to her. They supplied her with an in-door amusement; she drew well, and copied his field-nosegays with taste and delicacy. She had obtained, too, the loan of a piano, and talked stoutly of constant and vigorous practice, and of pursuing a steady course of reading. All young ladies, I believe, make such resolutions, and some few may possibly keep them; Miss Neville did not.

However lively and animated whilst her spirits were excited by society, it was evident that, when alone, poor Grace was languid and listless, and given to reverie. She would even fall into long fits of musing in company, start when spoken to, droop her fair head like a snow-drop, and sigh, oh, such sighs! so long, so deep, so frequent, so drawn from the very heart! They might, to be sure, have been accounted for by the great and sad change in her situation, and the

death of her indulgent uncle; but these griefs seemed worn out. I had heard such sighs before, and could not help imputing them to a different cause.

My suspicions were increased, when I found out accidentally that Dick and his donkey travelled every morning three miles to meet just such another Dick and such another donkey, who acted as letter-carriers to that side of the village. They would have arrived at Kinlay-end by noon in their natural progress, but Grace could not wait; so Dick and the donkey made a short cut across the country to waylay his namesake of the letter-bag, and fetch disappointment four hours sooner. It was quite clear that, whatever epistles might arrive, the one so earnestly desired never came. Then she was so suspiciously fond of moonlight, and nightingales, and tender poesy; and in the choice of her music, she would so repeat over and over one favorite duet, and would so blush if the repetition were remarked! Surely she could not always have sung "*La ci darem*" by herself. Poor Grace Neville! Love was a worse disease than the solitude of Kinlay-end.

Without pretending to any remarkable absence of curiosity on the one hand, or pleading guilty to the slightest want of interest in my dear young friend on the other, I was chiefly anxious to escape the honor of being her confidante. So sure as you talk of love, you nourish it; and I wanted hers to die away. Time and absence, and cheerful company, and summer amusements would, I doubted not, effect a cure; I even began to fancy her spirits were improving, when one morning, towards the middle of May, she came to me more hurried and agitated than I had ever seen her. The cause when disclosed seemed quite inadequate to produce so much emotion. Mrs. Martin had received a letter from her landlord informing her that he had let to a friend the apartments fitted up for himself at the farm, and that his friend would arrive on the succeeding day for a week's angling. "Well, my dear Grace, and what then?" "And this friend is Sir John Gower." "But who is Sir John Gower?" She hesitated a little.

"What do you know of him?" "Oh, he is the proudest, sternest, cruelest man! It would kill me to see him; it would break my heart, if my heart is not broken already." And then, in an inexpressible gush of bitter grief, the tale of love which I had so long suspected burst forth. She had been engaged to the only son of this proud and wealthy baronet, with the full consent of all parties; and on the discovery of her uncle's ruined circumstances, the marriage had been most harshly broken off by his commands. She had never heard from Mr. Gower since they were separated by his father's authority, but in the warmth and confidence of her own passionate and trustful love, she found an assurance of the continuance of his. Never was affection more ardent or more despairing. No common man could have awakened such tenderness in such a woman. I soothed her all I could; and implored her to give us the pleasure of her company during Sir John's stay: and so it was. He was expected the next evening, and she agreed to come to us in the forenoon.

The morning, however, wore away without bringing Miss Neville; dinner-time arrived and passed, and still we heard no tidings of her. At last, just as we were about to send to Kinlay-end for intelligence, Dick Crosby arrived on his donkey, with a verbal request that I would go to her there. Of course I complied, and as we proceeded on our way, I walking before, he riding behind, I endeavored to extract as much information as I could from my attendant, a person whom I generally found as communicative as heart could desire.

On this occasion he was most provokingly taciturn. I saw that there was no great calamity to dread, for the boy's whole face was evidently screwed up to conceal a grin, which, in spite of his efforts, broke out every moment in one or other of his features. He was bursting with glee, which for some unknown cause he did not choose to impart; and seemed to have put his tongue under a similar restraint to that which I have read of in some fairy tale, where an enchanter threatens

a loquacious waiting-maid with striking her dumb, if, during a certain interval, she utters more than two words—yes and no. Dick's vocabulary was equally limited. I asked him if Miss Neville was well? "Yes." If he knew what she wanted? "No." If Sir John Gower was arrived? "Yes." If Miss Neville meant to return with me? "No." At last, not able to contain himself any longer, he burst into a shout something between laughing and singing, and forcing the astonished donkey into a pace which, in that sober beast, might pass for a gallop, rode on before me, followed by the barking sheep-dog, to open the gate; whilst I, not a little curious, walked straight through the house to Miss Neville's sitting-room. I paused a moment at the door, as by some strange counteraction of feeling one often does pause, when strongly interested, and in that moment I caught the sweet notes of "*La ci darem*," sung by a superb manly voice and accompanied by Grace's piano; and instantly the truth flashed upon me, that the old Sir John Gower was gathered to his fathers, and that this was the heir and the lover come to woo and to wed. No wonder that Grace forgot her dinner engagement! No wonder that Dick Crosby grinned!

I was not mistaken. As soon as decorum would allow, Sir John carried off his beautiful bride, attended by her faithful adherent, the proudest and happiest of all odd boys! And the wedding was splendid enough to give a fresh impulse to village curiosity, and a new and lasting theme to our village gossips, who, first and last, could never comprehend Grace Neville.

The soul of the reader stirs with pity as he reads of the wild flight of this distressed young woman. It is translated for ROMANCE from the French of J. Ricard by M. E. B.

AN AGONIZED PENITENT.

I WAS strolling along one of the quiet streets of Paris near the Madeleine, enjoying the freshness of the early morning, sweet with the breath of narcissus and jonquils, heaped up in the little wagons surrounding the flower market, when suddenly the door of a house near by opened, and a woman rushed out, almost stumbling against me. She was young and charming, but very singular in appearance. Her toilet was elegant but carelessly arranged,—her hat perceptibly on one side of her head, her neck-ribbon dragged to the left, and the pearl-pin fastening her collar considerably to the right. Yet she was very beautiful,—tall and slender, with great, liquid gray eyes,—pleading, passionate eyes, while her face, of a transparent pallor, had the pathetic look of a frightened child. She stopped a moment and gazed up and down the street, as if fearful of being pursued. Then she hurried on, as if escaping from some one, every now and then looking back in seeming terror. From whom could that delicate creature be flying, at this early hour of the morning? Involuntarily attracted by her manner, I determined to follow her.

Seemingly reassured, she presently relaxed her hasty steps, and I could better see the beauty of her face and the sadness of her child-like eyes, with their great, dark circles beneath them. We are now in front of St. Philippe. My Unknown stops, appears to reflect a moment, then slowly ascends the steps of the church. This surprises me, but as she enters, I quickly follow.

Complete darkness, after the sunny radiance of the outside; unexpected silence; the smell of wax candles, and the faint perfume of evaporated incense succeed

the freshness of the morning air. As soon as my eyes accustom themselves to the dim light, I look for my Unknown. There she is, kneeling, praying, with her head in her hands. Ten, fifteen, twenty minutes run by. She remains motionless, except that now and then a shiver,—or is it a sob?—shakes the folds of her dress. At length, raising her head, she makes the sign of the cross, and prepares to go. Slowly gaining the door, she suddenly stops, the pallor of her face increased, the dark circles round her eyes more accentuated, the sweet calm of prayer gone from her lips. Something terrible, almost tragic, burns in her eyes. Then, with that firm contraction of the mouth, denoting inflexible resolve, she quickly descends the steps of the church, and hurries toward the river. Where is she going? Many dramatic ideas flit through my brain. Is it Remorse which is urging her on? This poor penitent! Does she feel that Heaven has no pardon for such as she, and that only the cold river must be her refuge?

My heart beat strong and fast, as, filled with these terrible thoughts, I swiftly pursue her flying steps, blessing the inspiration that has caused me to follow her and save her. Losing all idea of time and place, I only remember that we are nearing the Seine.

A jam of vehicles impedes the way. For a moment I lose sight of her. . . . Then again I see her. She enters an open door. I rush in. It is a confectioner's shop. *I find her seated at a little table, devouring cakes and cream, with the eager, ferocious appetite of a hungry woman!*

Mr. F. W. Robinson, author of "The Wrong That Was Done," "A Very Strange Family," and many other popular novels, in this robber-story of a hundred years ago (first published in the New York *Independent*), has all of the swing and dash of Thomas Hardy in his work of a similar description, but none of Hardy's coarseness.

MINIONS OF THE MOON.

Our story is of the time when George the Third was king; and our scene of action lies only at an old farm-house, six miles or so from Finchley—a quaint, ramshackle, commodious, old-fashioned, thatched farm-house that we see only in pictures now, and which has long since been improved off the face of the earth.

It was a farm-estate that was flourishing bravely in those dear, disreputable days when the people paid fivepence a pound for bread and only dared curse Protection in their hearts; when few throve, and many starved, and younger sons of gentry, without interest at court or Parliament, either cut the country, which served them so badly, or took to business on the king's highway, and served the country badly in return.

The Maythorpe Farm belonged to the Pemberthys, and had descended from father to son from days lying too far back to reckon up just now; and a rare, exclusive, conservative, bad-tempered, long-headed race the Pemberthys had always borne the reputation of being, feathering their nests well, and dying in them fat and prosperous.

There were a good many Pemberthys scattered about the home and midland counties, but it was generally understood in the family that the head of the clan, as it were, lived at the Maythorpe Farm, near Finchley, and here the Pemberthys would fore-gather on any great occasion, such as a marriage, a funeral, or a christening —the funeral taking precedence for numbers. There had been a grand funeral at Maythorpe Farm only a

few days before our story opens, for Reuben Pemberthy had been consigned to his fathers at the early age of forty-nine. Reuben Pemberthy had left one son behind him, also named Reuben, a stalwart, heavy-browed, good-looking young fellow, who, at two-and-twenty, was quite as well able to manage the farm, and everybody in it, as his father had been before him. He had got rid of all his relatives, save two, six days after his father's funeral, and those two were stopping by general consent, because it was signed, sealed and delivered by those whom it most concerned, that the younger woman, his cousin, pretty Sophie Tarne, was to be married before the year was out to the present Reuben Pemberthy, who had wooed her, and won her consent when he went down to her mother's house at King's Norton for a few days' trip last summer. Being a steady, handsome fellow, who made love in downright earnest, he impressed Sophie's eighteen years, and was somewhat timidly but graciously accepted as an affianced suitor. It was thought at King's Norton that Mrs. Tarne had done a better stroke of business in the first year of her widowhood than her late husband had done—always an unlucky wretch, Timothy—in the whole course of his life. And now Sophie Tarne and her mother were staying for a few days longer at Maythorpe Farm after the funeral.

Mrs. Tarne having been a real Pemberthy before her unfortunate marriage with the improvident draper of King's Norton, was quite one of the family, and seemed more at home at Finchley than was the new widow Mrs. Pemberthy—a poor, shaky lady, a victim to a chronic state of twittering and jingling and twitching, but one who, despite her shivers, had made the late Reuben a good wife, and was a fair housekeeper even now, although superintending housekeeping in jumps like a palsy-stricken kangaroo.

So Sophie and her bustling mother were of material assistance to Mrs. Pemberthy, and the presence of Sophie in that house of mourning—where the mourning had been speedily got over, and business had begun

again with commendable celerity—was a considerable source of comfort to young Reuben, when he had leisure after business hours—which was not always the case—to resume those tender relations which had borne to him last autumn such happy fruit of promise.

Though there was not much work to do at the farm in the winter time, when the nights were long and the days short, yet Reuben Pemberthy was generally busy in one way or another, and on the particular day on which our story opens, Reuben was away at High Barnet.

It had been a dull, dark day, followed by a dull, dark night. The farm-servants had gone to their homes, save the few that were attached to the premises—such as scullery-maids and dairy-maids—and Mrs. Pemberthy, Mrs. Tarne, and her daughter Sophie were waiting early supper for Reuben, and wondering what kept him so long from his home and his sweetheart.

Mrs. Tarne, accustomed, mayhap, to the roar and bustle of King's Norton, found the farm at Finchley a trifle dull and lonely—not that in a few days after a funeral she could expect any excessive display of life or frivolity—and, oppressed a bit that evening, was a trifle nervous as to the whereabouts of her future son-in-law, who had faithfully promised to be home a clear hour-and-a-half before the present time, and whose word might be always taken to be as good as his bond. Mrs. Tarne was the most restless of the three women: good Mrs. Pemberthy, though physically shaken, was not likely to be nervous concerning her son, and indeed was at any time only fidgety over her own special complaints—a remarkable trait of character deserving of passing comment here.

Sophie was not of a nervous temperament; indeed, for her eighteen years, was apparently a little too cool and methodical. And she was not flurried that evening over the delay in the arrival home of Reuben Pemberthy; she was not imaginative like her mother, and did not associate delay with the dangers of a dark night, though the nights *were* full of danger in the good old

times of the third George. She went to the door to look out, after her mother had tripped there for the seventh or eighth time, not for appearances' sake, for she was above that, but to keep her mother company and to suggest that these frequent excursions to the front door would end in a bad cold.

"I can't help fearing that something has happened to Reu," said the mother; "he is always so true to time."

"There are so many things to keep a man late, mother."

"Not to keep Reuben. If he said what hour he'd be back—he's like his father, my poor brother—he'd do it to the minute, even if there weren't any reason for his hurry."

"Which there is," said Sophie, archly.

"Which there is, Sophie. And why you are so quiet over this, I don't know. I am sure when poor Mr. Tarne was out late—and he was often very, very late, and the Lord knows where he'd been either!—I couldn't keep a limb of me still till he came home again. I was as bad as your aunt in-doors there, till I was sure he was safe and sound."

"But he always came home safe and sound, mother."

"Nearly always. I mind the time once, though—bless us and save us, what a gust!" she cried, as the wind came swooping down the hill at them, swirling past them into the dark passage and puffing the lights out in the big pantry beyond, when the maids began to scream. "I hope he hasn't been blown off his horse."

"Not very likely that," said Sophie, "and Reuben the best horseman in the county. But come in out of the gale, mother. The sleet cuts like a knife, too, and he will not come home any the sooner for your letting the wind into the house. And—why, here he comes, after all. Hark!"

There was the rattling of horses' hoofs on the frost-bound road; it was a long way in the distance, but it was the unmistakable signal of a well-mounted traveler approaching. Of more than one well-mounted

traveler, it became quickly apparent, the clattering was so loud and incessant and manifold.

"Soldiers!" said Sophie; "what can bring them this way?"

"It's the farmers coming the same way as Reuben, for protection's sake these winter nights, child."

"Protection?"

"Haven't you heard of the highwaymen about, and how a single traveler is never safe in these parts? Or a double one either—or——"

"Perhaps these are highwaymen."

"Oh, good gracious! Let us get in-doors and bar up," cried Mrs. Tarne, wholly forgetful of Reuben Pemberthy's safety after this suggestion. "Yes, it's as likely to be highwaymen as soldiers."

It was more likely. It was pretty conclusive that the odds were in favor of highwaymen, when, five minutes afterward, eight mounted horsemen rode up to the Maythorpe farm-house, dismounted with considerable noise and bustle, and commenced hammering at the stout oaken door with the butt-ends of their riding-whips—hammering away incessantly, and shouting out much strong language in their vehemence. This, being fortunately bawled forth all at once, was incomprehensible to the dwellers within-doors, now all scared together and no longer cool and self-possessed.

"Robbers!" said Mrs. Tarne.

"We've never been molested before—at least not for twenty years or more," said Mrs. Pemberthy, "and then I mind——"

"Is it likely to be any of Reuben's friends?" asked Sophie, timidly.

"Oh, no; Reuben has no bellowing crew like that for friends. Ask who is there—somebody."

But nobody would go to the door save Sophie Tarne herself; the maids were huddled in a heap together in a corner of the dairy, and refused to budge an inch; and Mrs. Tarne was shaking more than Mrs. Pemberthy.

Sophie, with the color gone from her face, went boldly back to the door, where the hammering on the

panels continued, and would have split anything of a less tough fiber than the English oak of which they were constructed.

"Who is there? What do you want?" she gave out in a shrill falsetto; but no one heard her till the questions were repeated about an octave-and-a-half higher.

"Hold hard, Stango, there's a woman calling to us. Stop your row, will you?"

A sudden cessation of the battering ensued, and some one was heard going rapidly backward over cobble-stones amidst the laughter of the rest, who had dismounted and were standing outside in the cold, with their hands upon their horses' bridles.

"Who is there?" asked Sophie Tarne again.

"Travelers in need of assistance, and who——" began a polite and even musical voice, which was interrupted by a hoarse voice.

"Open in the King's name, will you?"

"Open in the fiend's name, won't you?" called out a third and hoarser voice, "or we'll fire through the windows, and burn the place down."

"What do you want?"

"Silence," shouted the first one again; "let me explain, you dogs, before you bark again."

There was a pause, and the polite gentleman began again in his mellifluous voice:

"We are travelers belated. We require corn for our horses, food for ourselves. There is no occasion for alarm; my friends are noisy but harmless, I assure you, and the favor of admittance and entertainment here will be duly appreciated. To refuse your hospitality—the hospitality of a Pemberthy—is only to expose yourselves to considerable inconvenience, I fear."

"Spoken like a book, captain."

"And as we intend to come in at all risks," added a deeper voice, "it will be better for you not to try and keep us out, d'ye hear? D'ye—— Captain, if you shake me by the collar again, I'll put a bullet through you. I——"

"Silence! Let the worthy folk inside consider the position for five minutes."

"Not a minute longer, if they don't want the place burned about their ears, mind you," cried a voice that had not spoken yet.

"Who are you?" asked Sophie still inclined to parley.

"Travelers, I have told you."

"Thieves, cut-throats and murderers—eight of us—knights of the road, gentlemen of the highway, and not to be trifled with when half-starved and hard-driven," cried the hoarse man; "there, will that satisfy you, wench? Will you let us in, or not? It's easy enough for us to smash in the windows and get in that way, isn't it?"

Yes, it was very easy.

"Wait five minutes, please," said Sophie.

She went back to the parlor and to the two shivering women, and the crowd of maids who had crept from the dairy to the farm-parlor, having greater faith in numbers now.

"They had better come in, aunt, especially as we are quite helpless to keep them out. I could fire that gun," Sophie said, pointing to an unwieldy old blunderbuss slung by straps to the ceiling, "and I know it's loaded. But I'm afraid it wouldn't be of much use."

"It might make them angry," said Mrs. Pemberthy.

"It would only kill one at the best," remarked Mrs. Tarne, with a heavy sigh.

"And the rest of the men would kill us, the brutes," said Mrs. Pemberthy. "Yes, they'd better come in."

"Lord have mercy upon us," said Mrs. Tarne.

"There's no help for it," said Mrs. Pemberthy. "Even Reuben would not have dared to keep them out. I mind now their coming like this twenty years agone. It was——"

"I will see to them," said Sophie, who had become in her young brave strength quite the mistress of the ceremonies. "Leave the rest to me."

"And if you can persuade them to go away——" began Mrs. Tarne; but her daughter had already disappeared,

and was parleying through the keyhole with the strangers without.

"Such hospitality as we can offer, gentlemen, shall be at your service, providing always that you treat us with the respect due to gentlewomen and your hosts."

"Trust to that," was the reply. "I will answer for myself and my companions, Mistress Pemberthy."

"You give me your word of honor?"

"My word of honor," he repeated; "our words of honor, and speaking for all my good friends present; is it not so, men?"

"Ay, ay—that's right," chorused the good friends, and then Sophie Tarne, not without an extra plunging of the heart beneath her white crossover, unlocked the stout oaken door and let in her unwelcome visitors.

Seven out of the eight seemed to tumble in all at once, pushing against each other in their eagerness to enter, laughing, shouting and stamping with the heels of their jackboots on the bright red pantiles of the hall. The eighth intruder followed—a tall, thin man, pale-faced, and stern and young, with a heavy horseman's cloak falling from his shoulders, the front of which was gathered up across his arms. A handsome and yet worn face—the face of one who had seen better days and known brighter times—a picturesque kind of vagabond, take him in the candle-light. He raised his hat and bowed low to Sophie Tarne, not offering to shake hands as the rest of them had done who were crowding round her; then he seemed to stand suddenly between them and their salutations, and to brush them unceremoniously aside.

"You see to those horses, Stango and Grapp," he said, singling out the most obtrusive and the most black-muzzled of his gang. "Mistress Pemberthy will perhaps kindly trust us for a while with the keys of the stables and corn-bins."

"They are here," said Sophie, detaching them from a bunch of keys which in true housewifely fashion hung from her girdle. "The farm-servants are away in the village, or they should help you, sir."

"We are in the habit of helping ourselves—very much," said one of the highwaymen, dryly. "Pray don't apologize on that score, mistress."

Two of the men departed, five of them stalked into the farm parlor, flourishing their big hats and executing clumsy scrapings with their feet while bowing in mock fashion to the two nervous widows who sat in one corner, regarding them askance; the leader of these lawless ones dropped his cloak from his shoulders, left it trailing on the pantile floor, and made a rapid signal with his hand to Sophie to pause an instant before she entered the room.

"Treat them with fair words, and not too much strong waters," he said quickly; "we have a long ride before us."

He said it like a warning, and Sophie nodded as though she took his advice and was not ungrateful for it. Then they both went into the parlor and joined the company; and the maid-servants becoming used to the position, or making the best of it, began to bustle about and wait upon their visitors, who had already drawn up their seats to the supper-table, which had been spread with good things two hours ago anticipative of the return of Reuben Pemberthy to Maythorpe.

It was an odd supper-party at which Sophie Tarne presided, the highwaymen insisting, with much clamor and some emphatic oaths, that they would have no old women like Mrs. Tarne and Mrs. Pemberthy at the head of the table. Sophie was a pretty wench, and so must do the honors of the feast.

"The young girl's health, gentlemen, with three times three, and may her husband be a match for her in good looks," cried one admiring knight of the road; and then the toast was drunk. The ale flowed freely, and there was much laughter and loud jesting.

The man whom they called "Guy" and "Captain" sat by Sophie's side. He ate very little, and kept a watchful eye upon his men, after Stango and his companion had come in from the stables, and completed the number. He exchanged at first but few words

with Sophie, though he surveyed her with a grave attention that brought the color to her cheeks. He was a man upon guard. Presently he said:

"You bear your position well. You are not alarmed at these wild fellows?"

"No—not now. I don't think they would hurt me. Besides——"

"Besides—what?" he asked, as she paused.

"I have your word for them."

"Yes," he answered; "but it is only a highwayman's word."

"I can trust it."

"These men can be demons when they like, Mistress Pemberthy."

Sophie did not think it worth while to inform the gentleman that her name was not Pemberthy; it could not possibly matter to him, and there was a difficulty in explaining the relationship she bore to the family.

"Why are you with such men as these?" she asked, wonderingly.

"Where should I be? Where can I be else?" he asked, lightly now; but it was with a forced lightness of demeanor, or Sophie Tarne was very much deceived.

"Helping your king, not warring against him and his laws," said Sophie, very quickly.

"I owe no allegiance to King George. I have always been a ne'er-do-well, despised and scouted by a hard father and a villainous brother or two—and life with these good fellows here is, after all, to my mind. There's independence in it—and I prefer to be independent—and danger, and I like danger. A wronged man wrongs others in his turn, Mistress. And it is my turn now."

"Two wrongs cannot make a right."

"Oh, I do not attempt the impossible, Mistress Pemberthy."

"What will be the end of this—to you?"

"The gallows—if I cannot get my pistol out in time."

He laughed lightly and naturally enough, as Sophie

shrank in terror from him; one could see he was a desperate man enough, despite his better manners—probably as great an outcast as the rest of them, and as little to be trusted.

"That is a dreadful end to look forward to," she said.

"I don't look forward. What is the use—when *that* is the prospect?"

"Your father—your brothers——"

"Would be glad that the end came soon," he concluded. "They are waiting for it patiently. They have prophesied it for the last five years."

"They know, then?"

"Oh, yes, I have taken care that they should know," he answered, laughing defiantly again.

"And your mother—does she know?"

He paused, and looked at her very hard.

"God forbid."

"She is——"

"She is in Heaven, where nothing is known of what goes on upon earth."

"How can you tell that?"

"There would be no peace in Heaven otherwise, Mistress Pemberthy. Only great grief, intense shame, misery, despair, madness at the true knowledge of us all," he said, passionately. "On earth we men are hypocrites and liars, devils and slaves."

"Not all men," said Sophie, thinking of Reu Pemberthy.

"I have met none other. Perhaps I have sought none other—all my own fault, they will tell you where my father is. Where," he added bitterly, "they are worse than I am, and yet, oh! so respectable."

"You turned highwayman to—to——"

"To spite them, say. It is very near the truth."

"It will be a poor excuse to the mother, when you see her again."

"Eh?"

But Sophie had no time to continue so abstruse a subject with this misanthropical freebooter; she clapped

her hand to her side, and gave a little squeak of astonishment.

"What is the matter?" asked Captain Guy.

"My keys! They have taken my keys."

And sure enough, while Sophie Tarne had been talking to the captain, some one had severed the keys from her girdle and made off with them, and there was only a clean-cut black ribbon dangling at her waist instead.

"That villain Stango," exclaimed the captain. "I saw him pass a minute ago; he leaned over and whispered to you, Kits. You remember?"

"Stango?" said Kits, with far too innocent an expression to be genuine.

"Yes, Stango. You know he did."

"I dare say he did. I don't gainsay it, captain; but I don't know where he has gone."

"But *I* will know," cried the captain, striking his hand upon the table and making every glass and plate jump thereon. "I will have no tricks played here without my consent. Am I your master, or are you all mine?"

And here, we regret to say, Captain Guy swore a good deal, and became perfectly unheroic and inelegant and unromantic. But his oaths had more effect upon his unruly followers than his protests; and they sat looking at him in a half-sullen, half-shamefaced manner, and would have probably succumbed to his influence had not attention been diverted and aroused by the reappearance of Stango, who staggered in with four or five great black bottles heaped high in his arms. A tremendous shout of applause and delight heralded his return to the parlor.

"We have been treated scurvily, my men," cried Stango, "exceedingly scurvily; the best and strongest stuff in the cellar has been kept back from us. It's excellent—I've been tasting it first, lest you should all be poisoned; and there's more where this comes from—oceans more of it!"

"Hurrah for Stango!"

The captain's voice was heard once more above the

uproar, but it was only for a minute longer. There was a rush of six men toward Stango; a shouting, scrambling, fighting for the spirits which he had discovered; a crash of one black bottle to the floor, with the spirit streaming over the polished boards, and the unceremonious tilting over of the upper part of the supper-table in the ruffians' wild eagerness for drink.

"To horse, to horse, men! Have you forgotten how far we have to go?" cried the captain.

But they had forgotten everything, and did not heed him. They were drinking strong waters, and were heedless of the hour and the risks they ran by a protracted stay there. In ten minutes from that time saturnalia had set in, and pandemonium seemed to have unloosed its choicest specimens. They sang, they danced, they raved, they blasphemed, they crowed like cocks, they fired pistols at the chimney ornaments, they chased the maid-servants from one room to another, they whirled round the room with Mrs. Tarne and Mrs. Pemberthy, they would have made a plunge at Sophie Tarne for partner had not the captain, very white and stern now, stood close to her side with a pistol at full-cock in his right hand.

"I shall shoot the first man down who touches you," he said between his set teeth.

"I will get away from them soon. For Heaven's sake—for mine—do not add to the horror of this night, sir," implored Sophie.

He paused.

"I beg your pardon," he said, in a low tone of voice, "but—but I am powerless to help you unless I quell these wolves at once. They are going off for more drink."

"What is to be done?"

"Can you sing, Mistress Pemberthy?"

"Yes, a little. At least, they say so," she said, blushing at her own self-encomium.

"Sing something—to gain time. I will slip away while you are singing and get the horses round to the front door. Do not be afraid. Gentlemen," he cried,

in a loud voice, and bringing the handle of his pistol smartly on the head of the man nearest to him to emphasize his discourse, "Mistress Pemberthy will oblige the company with a song. Order and attention for the lady."

"A song! a song!" exclaimed the highwaymen, clapping their hands and stamping their heels upon the floor; and then, amidst the pause which followed, Sophie Tarne began a plaintive little ballad in a sweet, tremulous voice, which gathered strength as she proceeded.

It was a strange scene awaiting the return of Reuben Pemberthy, whose tall form stood in the doorway before Sophie had finished her sweet, simple rendering of an old English ballad. Reuben's round blue eyes were distended with surprise, and his mouth, generally very set and close, like the mouth of a steel purse, was on this especial occasion, and for a while, wide open. Sophie Tarne singing her best to amuse this vile and disorderly crew, who sat or stood around the room, half-drunk, and with glasses in their hands, pipes in their mouths, and the formidable old-fashioned horse-pistols in their pockets.

And who was the handsome man, with the long black, flowing hair, and pale face, standing by Sophie's side—his Sophie!—in a suit of soiled brocade and tarnished lace, with a Ramalie cocked hat under his arm and a pistol in his hand? The leader of these robbers, the very man who had stopped him on the King's highway three hours ago and taken every stiver which he had brought away from Barnet; who had, with the help of these other scoundrels getting mad drunk on his brandy, taken away his horse and left him bound to a gate by the roadside, because he would not be quietly robbed, but must make a fuss over it, and fight and kick in a most unbecoming fashion, and without any regard for the numbers by whom he had been assailed.

"I did not think you could sing like that," said the captain quietly, and in a low voice, when Sophie had finished her song, and a great shout of approval was

echoing throughout the farm, and many hundred yards beyond it.

"You have not got the horses ready," said Sophie, becoming aware that he was still at her side. "You said—you promised——"

"I could not leave you whilst you were singing. Did you know that was my mother's song?"

"How should I know that?"

"No—no. But how strange—how—ah! there is your brother at the door. I have had the honor of meeting Master Pemberthy of Finchley earlier this evening, I think. A brave young gentleman; you should be proud of him."

"My bro—oh! it is Reu. Oh! Reu, Reu, where have you been? Why did you not come before to help us—to tell us what to do!" And Sophie Tarne ran to him and put her arms round his neck and burst into tears. It was not a wise step on Sophie's part, but it was the reaction at the sight of her sweetheart, at a glimpse, as it were, of deliverance.

"There, there, don't cry, Sophie, keep a stout heart," he whispered; "if these villains have robbed us, they will not be triumphant long. It will be my turn to crow presently."

"I—I don't understand."

"I can't explain now. Keep a good face—ply them with more drink—watch me. Well, my friends," he said, in a loud voice, "you have stolen a march upon me this time; but I've got home, you see, in time to welcome you to Maythorpe, and share in your festivity. I'm a Pemberthy, and not likely to cry over spilt milk. More liquor for the gentlemen, you wenches, and be quick with it. Captain, here's to you and your companions, and next time you catch a Pemberthy, treat him more gently in return for a welcome here. More liquor, girls—the gentlemen are thirsty after their long ride."

Reuben drank to the healths of the gentlemen by whom he was surrounded; he was very much at home in his own house; very cool and undismayed, having

recovered from his surprise at finding an evening party being celebrated there. The highwaymen were too much excited to see anything remarkable in the effusion of Reuben Pemberthy's greeting; these were lawless times when farmers and highwaymen were often in accord, dealt in each other's horses, and drove various bargains at odd seasons and in odd corners of the market-places, and Reuben Pemberthy was not unknown to them, though they had treated him with scant respect upon a lonely country road, and when they were impressed by the fact that he was riding homeward with well-lined pockets after a day's huckstering. They cheered Mr. Pemberthy's sentiments, all but the captain, who regarded him very critically, although bowing very low whilst his health was drunk.

"My cousin and my future bride, gentlemen, will sing you another song. And I don't mind following suit myself, just to show there is no ill-feeling between us. And our worthy captain, he will oblige after me, I am sure. It may be a good many years before we meet again."

"It may," said the captain, laconically.

"I—I cannot sing any more, Reuben," cried Sophie.

"Try, Sophie, for all our sakes. Our home's sake—the home they would strip, or burn to the ground, if they only had the chance."

"Why do you wish to keep them here?" Sophie whispered back to him.

"I was released by a troop of soldiers who were coming in this direction," he said, hurriedly. "They have gone on toward Finchley in search of these robbers, but failing to find them they will return here as my guests till morning. That was their promise."

"Oh!"

Sophie could not say more. Reuben had left her side, and was talking and laughing with Stango as though he loved him.

"Your sweetheart, then, this cock-o'-the-game," said the captain to Sophie, as he approached her once more.

"Yes."

"'I had need wish you much joy, for I see but a little toward it,' as the poet says," he remarked bluntly. "He will not make you a good husband."

"You cannot say that."

"It's a hard face that will look into yours, mistress, and when trouble comes, it will not look pleasantly. You are going to sing again. I am glad."

"You promised to go away—long since."

"I did. But the host has returned and I distrust him. I am waiting now to see the end of it."

"No—no—I hope not. Pray go, sir."

"Is there danger?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. I am fond of danger, I have told you. It braces me up, it—why are you so pale?"

"You have been kind to me, and you have saved me from indignity. Pray take your men away at once."

"They will not go, and I will not desert them."

"For my sake—do!"

"A song, a song. No more love-making to-night, captain. A song from the farmer's pretty lass," cried out the men.

And then Sophie began to sing again, this time a love-song, the song of a maiden waiting for her soldier-boy to come back from the wars, a maiden waiting for him, listening for him, hearing the tramp of his regiment on the way toward her. She looked at Captain Guy as she sang, and with much entreaty in her gaze, and he looked back at her from under the cock of his hat, which he had pulled over his brows; then he wavered and stole out of the room. Kits was at the door, still with his mug of brandy in his hand. Guy seized him by the ear and took him out with him into the fresh air, where the white frost was, and where the white moon was shining now.

"The soldiers are after us, and know where we are, Kits. Pitch that stuff away."

"Not if——"

"And get the horses ready—quick. I will be with you in a moment."

He walked along the garden path in front of the big old farm, swung wide the farm gates and propped them open. Then he went down on all-fours and put his ear to the frost-bound country road and listened. "Yes," he added, "two miles away, and coming on sharp. Why not let them come? What does it matter how soon?" He strode back, however, with quick steps. Five minutes afterward he was at the door of the farm parlor again, with his cloak over his shoulder and his riding-whip in his hand.

"Boys, the red-coats are upon us!" he shouted. "Each man to his horse."

"We are betrayed, then!"

"We won't go and leave all the good things in this house," cried Stango; "why, it's like the Bank of England up-stairs, and I have the keys—I——"

"Stango, I shall certainly put a bullet through your head if you attempt to do anything more save to thank our worthy host for his hospitality, and give him up his keys. Do you hear?" he thundered forth; "will you hang us all, you fool, by your delay?"

The highwaymen were scurrying out of the room now—a few in too much haste to thank the givers of the feast, the others bowing and shaking hands in mock burlesque of their chief. Stango had thrown down his keys and run for it.

"Sorry we must leave you, Master Pemberthy," said the captain, "but I certainly have the impression that a troop of horse soldiers is coming in this direction. Pure fancy, probably; but one cannot risk anything in these hard times. Your purse, sir, which I took this afternoon—I shall not require it. Buy Mistress Sophie a wedding present with it; good-night."

He bowed low, but he did not smile till he met Sophie's frightened looks; then he bowed still lower, hat in hand, and said good-night, with a funny break in his voice and a longing look in his dark eyes that Sophie did not readily forget.

It was all like a dream after the highwaymen had put spurs to their horses and galloped away from Maythorpe Farm.

. . . . . .

It will be fifteen years come next winter-time since the "Minions of the Moon" held high carnival at the farm of Reuben Pemberthy. Save that the trees about the homestead are full of rustling green leaves and there is sunshine where the white frost lay, the farm looks very much the same; the great thatched roof has taken a darker tinge, and all the gold in it has turned to gray, and the walls are more weather-beaten than of yore; but it is the old farm still, standing "four-square," with the high-road to Finchley winding over the green hill yonder like a great, white dusty snake. Along the road comes a horseman at full speed, as though anxious to find a shelter before nightfall, for the King's highway in this direction is no safer than it used to be, and people talk of Abershaw and Barrington, and a man with sixteen strings to his hat, who are busy in this direction. But the days are long now, and it wants some hours before sundown, when the traveler leaps from his horse, and stands under the broad eaves of the porch, where the creepers are growing luxuriantly and are full of fair white flowers.

The traveler is a good horseman, though he has passed the hey-day of his youth. It is not for some three minutes afterward that his man-servant, hot and blown and powdered thick with dust, comes up on horseback after him and takes charge of his master's steed. The master is a man of forty years or more, and looking somewhat older than his years, his hair being very gray. He stoops a little between the shoulders, too, when off his guard, though he can look straight and stalwart enough when put to it. He is very dark—a fiercer sun than that which shines on England has burned him a copper color—and he has a mustache that Munchausen might have envied.

He knocks at the door and asks if Master Reuben Pemberthy can be seen at a moment's notice. The

maid-servant looks surprised, but says, "My mistress is within, sir."

"Reuben Pemberthy's wife that is," he mutters, pulling thoughtfully at his long mustache; "ah, well! perhaps she will see me."

"What name shall I say?"

"Sir Richard Isshaw; but she will not know the name."

He stands in the hall, looking about him critically; his man-servant, still mounted, goes slowly back toward the roadway with his master's horse and his own, where he remains in waiting. Presently Sir Richard Isshaw is shown into the farm parlor, very cool and full of shadow, with great green plants on the broad recesses of the open window, and bees buzzing about them from the outer world.

A young woman in deep widow's weeds rises as he enters, and makes him one of those profound courtesies which were considered appropriate for the fair sex to display to those in rank and honor in the good old days when George was king. Surely a young woman still, despite the fifteen years that have passed, with a young supple figure and a pleasant unlined face. Eighteen years and fifteen only make thirty-three, and one can scarcely believe in time's inroads looking upon Sophie Pemberthy. The man cannot. He is surprised, and he looks at her through tears in his dark eyes.

"You asked to see Mr. Reuben Pemberthy," she says, sadly. "You did not know that——"

"No, I did not know," he says a little huskily; "I am a stranger to these parts. I have been long abroad."

"May I inquire the nature of your errand, Sir Richard?" she asks in a low voice; "though I am afraid I cannot be of any service as regards any business of the farm."

"How is that?" he asks steadily, keeping his gaze upon her.

"The farm passes to Mr. Pemberthy's cousin in a few days' time."

"Indeed! Then you——"

He pauses half-way for a reply, but it is long in coming. Only the humming of the bees disturbs the silence of the room.

"Then you leave here?" he concludes at last.

"Yes. It is only the male Pemberthys who rule," she says.

"Your—your children?"

"My one little boy, my dear Algy, died before his father. It was a great disappointment to my husband that he should die. We female Pemberthys," she says, with a sudden real bright little smile that settles down into sadness again very quickly, "do not count for a great deal in the family."

"How long has Mr. Pemberthy been dead?"

"Six months."

"You are left poor," he says, very quickly now.

"I—I don't think you have a right to ask me such a question, sir."

"I have no right," he replies. "These are foreign manners. Excuse them, please. Don't mind me."

Still he is persistent.

"From son to son's son, and the women left anywhere and anyhow—that is the Pemberthy law, I expect. I have seen the workings of such a law before. Not that I ought to complain," he adds, with a forced laugh—a laugh that Mrs. Pemberthy seems suddenly to remember—"for I have profited thereby."

"Indeed," says the farmer's widow, for the want of a better answer at the moment.

"I am a younger son; but all my brothers have been swept away by wars or pestilence, and I am sent for in hot haste—I who had shaken the dust of England from my feet for fifteen years."

"Fifteen years?"

"Almost. Don't you recollect the last time I was in this room?"

"You—in this room, Sir Richard?"

"Yes; try and remember when that was. I have only come to look at the old place and you, just for

once, before I go away again. Try and think, Mistress Pemberthy, as I used to call you."

She looks into the red, sunburnt face, starts, blushes, and looks away.

"Yes, I remember. You are——"

"Well!"

"Captain Guy!"

"Yes, that is it, Richard Guy Isshaw, the younger son who went wholly to the bad—who turned highwayman—whom *you* saved. The only one out of the eight—the rest were hanged at Tyburn and Kennington, poor devils; and I thought I would ride over and thank you, and see you once more. Your husband would have hanged me, I dare say—but there, there, peace to his soul."

"Amen," whispers Sophie Pemberthy.

"You saved me. You set me thinking of my young mother, who died when I was a lad, and loved me much too well. And you taught me there were warm and loving hearts in the world; and when I went away from here, I went away from the old life. I cannot say how that was; but," shrugging his shoulders, "so it was."

"It was a call," said Sophie, piously.

"A call to arms, for I went to the wars. And what is it now that brings me back here to thank you—an old time-worn reprobate turned soldier—and turned respectable! What is that?"

"I don't know."

"Another call, depend upon it. A call to Maythorpe, where I expected to find a fat farmer and his buxom partner, and a crowd of laughing boys and girls—where I hoped I might be of help to some of them, if help were needed. And," he adds, "I find only you—and you, just the same fair, bright girl I left behind me long ago."

"Oh, no."

"It is like a dream. It is very remarkable to me; yes, it's another call, Mistress Pemberthy, depend upon it."

And it is not the last call either. The estate of Sir Richard Isshaw lies not so many miles from Maythorpe Farm that a good, long ride cannot overcome the distance between them. And the man turned respectable —the real baronet—is so very much alone and out of place in his big house that he knows not what to do.

And Mistress Pemberthy is very much alone, too, and going out alone into the world—almost friendless, and with only two hundred pounds and perhaps the second-best bed—who knows?—as her share of her late loving but rather hard and unsympathetic husband's worldly goods.

And folks do say, Finchley way, that pretty Mistress Pemberthy will be Lady Isshaw before the winter sets in; and that it will be exactly fifteen years since these two first set eyes upon each other.

It is not unlikely that some whose eyes fall upon the following blood-curdling tale, will remember reading it when, twenty or thirty years ago, it was copied from one paper into another all over the United States. It bore the modest signature of "Augusta Browne." There is nothing in the name to suggest Mulhatton, the celebrated newspaper romancer of recent times, and it was supposed by many of the readers of "An Unearthly Banquet" that it was strictly true. But, alas! a cynical and incredulous generation has since arisen who will suggest that the Rev. Mr. E. had only supped and drunk too liberally before retiring to that elegant chamber.

AN UNEARTHLY BANQUET.

The Rev. Mr. E——, travelling on a ministerial tour through the south of Ireland, one autumn day, found it impossible to reach his place of destination, yet distant many miles, before the coming on of night, which already announced its rapid approach by its sombre herald, twilight. During the day, his ride had been suggestive of solitary meditation, as the portion of the country through which he journeyed was, owing to the grandeur and diversification of its scenery, one of the most picturesque in the kingdom. His path had wound through gardens abandoned to the rank luxuriance of the thistle and bramble, and past deserted homesteads, the histories of which were rife with tales of violence, bloodshed, and family extinction; and he had oft with toil and difficulty guided his good steed through many of those deep labyrinthian glens and matted fens and natural fastnesses in which the land of the shamrock glories.

In the earlier part of his journey, a few comfortable homes and farm-houses had been visible to Mr. E——; but as the day wore on, the way grew increasingly gloomy and disheartening, and glimpses of the human face divine more and more rare. At last it became expedient to think of obtaining a lodging for the night,

and he paused to reflect and reconnoitre. Not far from him towered the turrets of a venerable castle, around which clustered trees of an immense growth and height, whose thick trunks, gnarled and overhanging branches, and sombre foliage, seemed as if anxious to keep out the gaze of prying stragglers, and prevented the main body of the building from being seen. A sloping lawn led down to a deep, silent lake, so still and so glassy that not a ripple disturbed its calm surface. Beyond were piled a ledge of mountains, rising in bold relief against the murky sky, and adding additional wildness to the landscape. Altogether, the aspect of the place was so repelling, and spoke so strongly of desertion, that the clergyman involuntarily turned away. Meanwhile, the darkness increased apace and no other habitation was in sight but one—that of a person whom he well knew by report to be an implacable hater of religion and its ministers. Alternative, therefore, there was none between seeking admission as an unwelcome guest, from which his innate delicacy shrunk, and remaining exposed to the fury of a storm which gave warning of being in preparation by hoarse boomings of thunder, the mighty sub-bass of the elements, and lurid gleams of fire. He hesitated for some time, but determined at length to try whether the voice of hospitality might not plead his cause, and gain for him, at least, the shelter of a roof, whatever might be his subsequent treatment and entertainment: any refuge appeared preferable to exposure to the peltings of the storm. His horse, also, began to exhibit unequivocal symptoms of dissatisfaction at the existing state of affairs, and plainly intimated a disposition to seek better quarters, by impatient stampings and neighings. Mr. E—— accordingly rode up to the door of the house and knocked. A tall, dark-visaged man appeared. Mr. E—— introduced himself, apologized for the intrusion, and solicited accommodation for the night. The gentleman replied that he would with pleasure furnish him supper, and find room in the stable for his horse, but regretted that there was not in the house a vacant chamber.

"But are you a coward?" he demanded, abruptly.

"I hope not."

"Because, if you are not, yonder is the castle, across the park, of which I am agent; no one is in it, as the owner is travelling on the Continent. I will not disguise from you, however, that strange tales are told of its being haunted, which was, in fact, the principal reason for the desertion of the Earl of L——'s family. If, as you say, you are not afraid, and feel willing to incur the risk of midnight visitants, you are welcome to a bed there."

Not seeming to notice the sneer which accompanied the last words, Mr. E—— accepted the offer with thankfulness, remarking that, however he might prefer society, yet, as a minister of the gospel, he had no cause for fearing even the powers of darkness, should they league against him.

"Very well, then," said the host, whom we may designate as Mr. D——, "I will order supper, and, while you are partaking of it, send servants over to the castle to prepare a room and light a fire; and, lest you should be in any doubt as to the sincerity of my intentions, I will attend you there myself, and assist in searching your room and the adjoining ones."

After supper, having ascertained that his horse had been well attended to, Mr. E—— expressed himself in readiness to attend his host to his destined lodgings, as he was much fatigued with his journey, and longed for repose. The rain had not yet commenced, but the flashes of lightning, and the howling of the wind through the stately oaks and elms, presaged its coming violence, and suggested to the imagination of Mr. E—— the fitness of just such a night and place for a deed of blood; and he shuddered, as they traversed the gloomy park, as many a tale of murdered travellers that he had heard in boyhood came forward in his mind. To the best of men sudden death has an appalling aspect, but under such circumstances as these, apart from all that he loved, alone and unpitied, it seemed tenfold terrible. Then, again, he would think on the unexpected hospital-

ity of Mr. D——, and smile at the horrors which busy fancy had conjured up.

As they drew near the castle, its desolate appearance was not much calculated to re-assure him, or calm his drooping spirits. Mr. D—— carried a lantern, the faint glimmering of which only served to make darkness visible, as it fell on the grass-grown walks and old gray stones that paved the court-yard. The noise of their steps and voices disturbed a crazy congregation of owls, bats and rooks, the time-honored inhabitants of the turrets, which, startled and affrighted, flew about, flapping their wings, and uttering dismal cries at the unwonted invasion of their premises. A chill ran through Mr. E——. How he wished for even the neighborhood of his horse, or anything that had life; the company of a dog would have been invaluable; fain would he have stretched himself in the stable; but, dreading to awaken the sarcasm of his grim host, he said nothing. They reached the grand entrance. On opening, the door grated harshly and complainingly on its rusty hinges, and a rush of night-winds moaned bodingly as they entered. While ascending the staircase, dim shadows seemed to gather and troop around them, with fantastic gestures beckoning them onward; a thousand spirit-eyes peered inquisitively out of the arches and frets in the ceilings; snatches of faint song echoed through the corridors; glimpses he had of half-formed faces flitting about in corners, and whispers and sighs floated on the air. Mr. E—— again smiled at his own imaginings, and, making a strong mental effort, fairly shook off all further nonsensical apprehensions. They thoroughly examined the room destined for him, and the adjacent ones, and afterward looked through those below, one of which was a hall of magnificent dimensions, superbly carved and gilded in the old style. His companion reiterated his assurances that no living being save himself would be in the castle, and, with an invitation to breakfast at his house in the morning, bade him good-night. Mr. E—— attended him to the door, double-locked and chained it after him, and then ascended to his own

apartment, which he also carefully locked and secured. He certainly was situated very pleasantly. The rain now came down in torrents, but the tremendous peals of thunder above him, and the vivid flashes of lightning which occasionally pierced their way through the heavy damask curtains, only so much the more enhanced the value of his comfortable retreat, and made his feelings those of unmingled satisfaction. A bright fire blazed on the old-fashioned hearth, and two wax candles stood lighted on an elegant inlaid table beside it.

The room was richly furnished in an antique style, and the luxurious couch, to one tired as he was, looked extremely inviting to repose. But the inclination to sleep had quite left him, and a strange wakefulness had superseded all his former almost overpowering weariness. Several noble paintings by the great masters, Guido and Da Vinci, adorned the walls, one of which was a beautiful picture of the Virgin and Child, representing Him while yet the radiant brow was unpierced by thorns, and ere the delicate fair cheek had been subjected to the blow of the smiter, or the Prayer of Prayers had been gasped by those cherub lips. Upon these he mused for an hour or so, and then, according to his usual custom, opened his pocket Bible, and read and meditated until his excitement passed away, and a sacred calm gradually settled upon him.

Suddenly his attention was aroused by a singular commotion in the room below. Heavy tables were dragged about, dishes and glasses rattled, chairs violently pushed hither and thither, doors slammed, and, in short, he heard every noise attendant upon the laying out of an extensive table. This unaccountable uproar continued unabated for about half-an-hour, when, all at once, the place became hushed as the grave. Soon after, a slow, heavy step began to ascend the stairs. Could his host have deceived him? The ominous step continued to ascend; nearer it drew, and still nearer, until it stopped at his door.

Three sullen knocks.

Mr. E—— paused a moment, and then asked,

"Who's there?"

A hollow voice replied:

"*The master wants you down to supper!*"

"Excuse me, if you please; I cannot go down."

The dull, heavy step descended the stairs, and entered the hall below. Mr. E—— began to conjecture that a band of forgers or smugglers had made the place their abode, and, being aware of his proximity, wished to inveigle him into their power, in order to insure his silence. His sensations were becoming very unenviable; but the pause was brief, for again he heard the step ascending—if possible, heavier and slower than before; and again the three sullen knocks were given.

"What do you want?"

"*The master wants you down to supper!*"

"Tell him I have already supped, and do not wish for more," replied Mr. E——, alarmed at this pertinacity.

The step departed as before, and he distinguished angry voices in loud debate below. Were their designs hostile, how could he hope to escape? Egress, unperceived, was utterly impossible. It is curious to note, in cases of emergency, how many plausible schemes will present themselves to the mind, which, in placid moments, would never be dreamt of. So, many a plan did he revolve in a minute, but to put one of them in execution was out of the question. He was a prisoner, and clearly in the clutches of his enemies, for such they must be. His heart sank like lead as his thoughts reverted to his quiet, happy home, where the beloved ones were probably at this very time joyously expecting him, but who, mayhap, would never behold him more.

The third time he heard the dreaded foot approaching, so heavy every foot-fall now that they smote on his ear like cannon-balls. The three sullen knocks again.

"What do you want, that you persist in thus disturbing me?" demanded Mr. E——, loudly.

"*The master wants you down to supper!*"

"I come," said Mr. E——, and mentally imploring the protection of heaven against all violence, he grasped

a candle, and placing his Bible under his arm, opened the door. A grim, gigantic figure, habited in black from head to foot, stood without, who, motioning him to follow, led the way to the same splendid apartment in which he had been in the earlier part of the evening. The door was thrown wide open by his sable guide, and he was ushered in. The master of the revels received him with a silent bow, and escorted him to the table, which was covered with a sumptuous banquet, and entirely surrounded by guests, with the exeption of one seat which had been reserved for him.

As he seated himself, a burst of hideous laughter pealed out, and died away in the distance. He glanced at the company: they were all robed in unrelieved black, and from countenances of livid ghastliness the hollow eyes shot forth gloomy flashes of fire as they glared upon him. All was silence—dead silence! It was appalling. He felt the blood curdle in his veins. The host helped him first, and then the other guests. Demoniac grins wreathed their thin lips as they watched to see him eat. But he no longer doubted as to the nature of the company, and touched not the unhallowed food. A dead weight hung upon the atmosphere, almost crushing him to the earth; dense sulphurous vapors floated around, and the lowering brows of the company knit into deeper scowls as they burst out into another fit of Mephistopheles-like mirth.

A moment of fearful trial, it is said, occurs in the life-time of every mortal. Mr. E—— shuddered as he felt that his had arrived; and what a tremendous ordeal it was—no less than a personal conflict with the powers of darkness! The host signed peremptorily to him to begin. With a great effort—for he well knew that each fiendish eye was riveted upon him—he exclaimed:

"I have never been in the habit of eating without having first asked a blessing."

So saying, he bowed his head on his Bible, and cried with a loud voice:

"Oh Lord, thou hast often fed me with the bread of heaven; suffer me not now to feast with devils!"

A fearful shriek—a peal of thunder that shook the castle to its deep foundations—and, raising his head, Mr. E—— discovered that he was alone in the supper-room, sitting in the same place, with only his own candle, out of the score of lights, burning on the table beside him. For a while he was stunned, his senses were overpowered; but soon recovering his self-command, he retraced his way back to his room, where, as may well be imagined, he slept not. That night was one prolonged vigil. It did on him the work of years of agony. At a reasonable hour in the morning he left the castle, and went to the house of the agent, who welcomed him very cordially, inquiring, with much solicitude, how he had rested, and whether he had been molested or disturbed. Mr. E—— answered him in a composed manner, which did not convey the slightest intimation of the occurrences of the past night. Not wishing to excite suspicion by a precipitate departure, he awaited breakfast, and thanking Mr. D—— for his politeness, asked for his horse, which had received benevolent care, and rode away.

The instant he reached his home he became violently ill. He never overcame the terrors of that night, and in a few weeks he was dead.

The essence of every lovers' quarrel is contained in this brilliant little sketch, which has been written for ROMANCE by Annie W. Sanborn. A contention so ancient and well-established is doubtless destined to immortality,—but there are not always lilies to relieve the rancor.

AMARYLLIS.

It was now three days and nights since he had seen her, and their parting had been of the stormiest. He had been so right and she so wrong that there was nothing for him to do but leave her with wrath in his eyes and bitterness in his heart. Now he had come back. Nothing had occurred to bring about a reconciliation, but his anger had burned itself to a dull reproach, and, still knowing himself right, yet too weary for stubbornness, he had come and was waiting for her.

The room where he stood was deeply shaded and so was the one back of it, and still beyond that, at the end of the dusky vista which he faced, glowed a bunch of amaryllis lilies. They wore a sullen red, like the sun through a mist or like love behind anger. Their color seemed to fill the room as the fragrance of other flowers might do.

He stood with his back to the door through which he knew she would come, and listened for her step and the rustle of her gown on the stair. His gaze was fixed upon the lilies. There was something strange about them. His eyes were aching from sleeplessness, and every nerve was tense with the long strain of resentment and yearning. As he looked, half-consciously, at the flowers, their color seemed to well out and meet his eyes. Then all at once, as his vision blurred, they expanded, and condensed, and became—herself.

She came toward him through the dusk, her red gown glowing like the marsh-lilies, her head slightly bowed, her clasped hands dropped before her. Her eyes were

fixed on his face, and her mouth had compressed itself into a dubious but expectant stiffness. He realized the expectancy, and hardened his heart. Whatever he had come for, it had not been for new humiliation, and how could he ask her to forgive him, knowing that she was wrong?

As she looked at his eyes, suffused with the intensity of his gaze, her lip quivered. It was a moment for decision, not for hesitancy. He held out his arms and she came.

"Are you sorry?" said he.

"Are you?" said she.

One almost wishes while reading this powerful sketch from the *Overland Monthly* that the author's skill were not so great. So vividly has he photographed the eagle's nest, the abyss below, the awful risk of the foolhardy adventurer who exposed his life for a worthless wager,—that strong nerves are required to bear the sight. The writer signs himself "Dan De Quille."

THE EAGLE'S NEST.

In the upper part of its course the South Yuba River dashes and boils down through a tremendous cañon for a distance of many miles. Everywhere from the town of Washington upward the mountains on both sides of the river, north and south, rise to such a height that one must "look twice" to see their tops. But down near Washington the inclosing mountains are not vertical, as are the walls of rock up where the river breaks down from the main range of the high Sierras. Up there the waters of the river thunder along between perpendicular walls hundreds of feet in height.

It is above this mighty cañon that the waters of the river were, in the early days, turned into what was then known as Kidd's Ditch—I suppose the same that is now called the South Yuba Canal. In constructing this ditch it was necessary to build through the cañon a large flume. This flume had to be carried along the vertical south wall of the cañon for a great distance, at a height, in places, of from 300 to 500 feet above the bed of the river, and from 200 to 300 feet below the top of the wall, from which at several points lumber and timber were lowered by means of ropes.

The flume was supported on iron brackets, holes for which were drilled in the face of the cliff by men suspended on platforms like those used by house painters. These platforms were lowered from above by means of a strongly anchored windlass. To construct a flume thus in mid-air was a costly and perilous work, but for gold men will venture all things—even life.

The men working on the flume in time became accustomed to the dizzy height, and indifferent to the dangers that beset them. In the whole work only two or three lives were lost. Though the men employed upon the flume seemed to move fearlessly about in their work, one not hardened to such business could with difficulty nerve himself to venture near enough to the awful chasm to look down to where the river boiled along its bottom.

Owing to the swiftness of the current through the cañon, and to the many jutting ledges of rock, bowlders, rapids, swirls and swashes, the water was everywhere churned into foam. Seen from the top of the cliff, the water in the channel of the river looked as white as milk.

One experienced very peculiar sensations while looking down upon the boiling and foaming waters—a very creepy, unpleasant feeling. In looking into space above, one feels all right, but on gazing into space below all is wrong; one's head seems turning upside down.

Besides this, there was in the scene something weird and unnatural. But what was it? Presently it occurred to one that what made the scene uncanny was the silence—the absence of the roar that should accompany waters visibly so tumultuously tossed and agitated. Instead of the deafening roar and swash natural to such a scene, we only caught now and again, as brought near or wafted afar by the shifting winds, a faint and monotonous murmur—the one note into which was merged and blended all the pouring, plunging, splashing and dashing so far away below.

To stand on the brink of the chasm and look down upon the wild whirl of waters at its bottom, gave a man about the same uncanny feeling he would experience were he to see walls and buildings falling on all sides of him, without producing more sound than if they were walls and buildings of air—the structures of dreamland.

One Sunday while the work of carrying the big flume

through the cañon was in progress I went with a party of half-a-dozen miners and others from the town of Omega to see it. We had heard so many wonderful stories about the great undertaking, the difficulties that were being overcome, and so on, that we were all anxious to see with our own eyes what was being done.

In going to the point where the flume-building was in progress, we procured horses and took the main ridge above the town, where we had for nearly the whole distance a wagon road—the Bear Valley road, I believe it was called. When opposite where the flume was going in, we left the road, and taking to the forest, zigzagged down the face of the mountain to the camp of the workmen. There was not another dwelling of any kind within ten miles of the spot.

Being all young and full of fun, we charged down upon the quiet camp like a band of wild Indians, and soon had the place in a considerable state of commotion, for we were received in about the same spirit as we exhibited by all who were visible about the camp. Then an irruption of visitors was not an every-day occurrence.

With our party went a Mr. Van Vrankin, the hotel-keeper of the town of Omega. He was the hero of our first adventure, as he came near being plunged head first into the abyss. On our arrival at the camp we had dismounted and tied our horses to some trees near the boarding-house; that is, all except Van Vrankin, who, being older than any other of the party, and more careful of his bones, had lagged behind, executing numerous elaborate zigzags on the face of the mountain.

When Van arrived, we were all out near the verge of the chasm. Seeing us with a carpenter who was an old acquaintance, Van rode directly up to our party. Shaking hands with his friend, he dismounted, and stood talking with his bridle on his arm.

Van had a shepherd-dog he highly prized, and this dog had come with him on the trip, as he and the horse Van rode were inseparable companions. Had the dog been left at home, he would have cried his heart out.

Now it so happened that there were two or three cows kept at the camp, and one of these had a calf that was kept in a pen near the lodging-house. As soon as Van halted and dismounted, his dog began prospecting the camp. About the first thing that attracted his attention was the calf, and he went to the pen to see it.

No sooner, however, had he reached the pen than he was discovered by the mother of the calf. The cow charged with a snort of wrath, and the dog turned tail and fled toward his friend the horse.

Seeing the yelping dog coming, with the cow in full chase, the horse was startled, and, throwing his head up, began backing directly toward the brink of the precipice. The more Van pulled, the higher the horse threw his head and the faster he backed. In running backward the horse pulled Van with him, who with feet braced was sliding along on the carpet of pine needles, quite unaware of the near proximity of the precipice.

"Look out!" "Let go the horse!" "Look out for the cañon!" cried a dozen voices, yet Van held on. Having been engaged in conversation from the moment of his arrival, he had not looked about him, and little thought he was so near a vertical precipice over seven hundred feet high.

Not heeding the babel of voices roaring at him, Van still pulled at his horse, which caused the animal to pull back all the more stubbornly, going squarely to the edge of the chasm.

"Let go the horse for Christ's sake!" yelled the carpenter, at the same time making a rush for Van and grabbing him by the coat-tails. At the very instant he did so the horse went over the brow of the cliff, the bridle luckily slipping out of Van's hands.

The horse seemed to cling to the brink a fraction of a second by his fore feet, and then disappeared. No sooner had the horse tumbled into the abyss than the dog ran to the verge, and without an instant's hesitation leaped over after him.

All was over so quickly that Van hardly realized

what had happened, and would have run to the brink of the chasm to look after his horse and dog had not his friend the carpenter held him and told him of the danger. Van said afterward he thought all the time the fuss was about some little gully.

The next moment after saving Van, the carpenter was again all excitement. "My God!" cried he, "my God! the men below! the men on the flume are all killed!" and he ran to the railing by the windlass and looked over. After a glance he turned to us and said, "Thank God, they are all right!"

We afterward ascertained by calling down to the men that the falling horse had passed only about ten feet in front of the end of the flume where they were at work.

One of the men said: "We thought old Satan was coming with one of his imps after him!" Another one said that they all very plainly "felt the wind" of the falling horse.

Looking down from the railing by the windlass we could see a black spot—the horse was black—at the edge of the milky stream. We could see nothing of the dog. We called down to the men three hundred feet below; they said the horse was motionless, but a speck that was probably the dog seemed to show some motion at times.

As the horse was in a place that could not be reached except by a tramp of five miles up the river to where a descent into the cañon might be made, Van left ten dollars to be given to any one among the workmen who would bring out his bridle and saddle, and send them to Nevada City at the first opportunity. The man was also to bring out the dog, if he was not hurt beyond hope of recovery.

I may say right here that the man who the next day descended into the cañon found the dog with his back and both hind legs broken. The poor brute had dragged himself to the head of the dead horse, beside which he lay. He greeted the workman with glad barks. In order to give the dog a last gratification the

man gave him all the water he could drink, and then put a bullet through his head.

The windlass and railing of which I have spoken were on a platform of timbers of large size and about seventy-five feet in length. The ends—there were a dozen logs—had been pushed out five or six feet over the brink of the precipice, while the "inshore" ends were anchored far back from the bank, and weighted with cribs of stone. When we had been shown this place, we could in safety stand and look down into the chasm.

As we were about starting for home, the men at the flume camp told us that about a mile-and-a-half down the river was to be seen the nest of a pair of eagles, in which were two eaglets. They said we might return that way and see the nest, which was on a scrub cedar growing on the verge of the precipice and projecting over the abyss.

"But," said the man, "we do not feel afraid of your carrying off our pets. The nest is over a part of the cañon that is about one thousand feet deep, and out on the branches of a nearly horizontal tree. Not a man in the State has the nerve to climb out along the trunk of that cedar and bring in the young eagles!"

We concluded to ride by the eagles' nest in returning, as it was not out of our way.

As we rode along down the river, all the talk was of the eagles. "Evidently no one working on the flume dare try to get the young eagles," said Van, who had made a bargain with one of our party to go home on foot and let him ride.

So much talk was made about the feat of going after the eagles that I at last said that I was not afraid to go out after them. I had gazed down into the cañon so long from the windlass platform that I imagined I had cured myself of the dread of mere depth, and had gained such control of my head that I could trust it; besides, I would not look down into the cañon. I would follow the rule of the rope-dancers, and see nothing but the trunk of the tree and the eaglets.

I was dared, hooted and scouted. Two or three were ready to put up fifty dollars to fifty cents, and as many more, one hundred dollars to one dollar, that I would not dare go out after the young eagles. I said I would consider the bets when I had seen the situation of the nest.

When we came to the nest, it was seen at a glance that it could not possibly have been so placed as to be more difficult of access. The cedar grew on the very brink of the precipice, rooted in a large cleft that contained some soil. It was only about eight inches in diameter, and extended almost horizontally from the brow of the precipice, which was vertical. Out about ten feet the tree put forth several branches, which spread out like a fan. The boughs of the tree formed a sort of platform on which was the nest and the young eagles, with naught below for a distance of a thousand feet more substantial than thin air.

The eaglets seemed to be pretty well feathered, and after a critical examination of them and the situation, I told my companions I would take all their bets and go out after the birds, but would not agree to bring them in, as they might perhaps fly away.

All held to their offers.

I stripped to shirt and drawers. Then even such as before had been doubters began to believe me in earnest. Bob Paxton, a brother "Buckeye," earnestly labored to dissuade me from the undertaking. He had a real brotherly regard for me, not alone on that occasion, but to the last day of his life. Poor Bob! his bones lie now in the land of the Mormon.

An eagle that had been wheeling about at a height of some hundreds of feet above us—probably the mother bird—began to grow uneasy at sight of our party so near its young. It uttered several shrill shrieks as it circled above our heads. Its cry was presently answered, and we saw coming from the north, as from the top of the great pine-clad mountain on the opposite side of the river toward Eureka, the mate that had been called. The two shrieking birds swooped about in a

manner so threatening that Bob Paxton said they would surely attack me if I ventured out near their young. He made me belt to my side a long "Arkansaw toothpick," which he always carried, and which he informed me would "cut like a razor."

The belting of my big knife completed my preparations for the perilous adventure. My determination was to see nothing except the tree and the eaglets. By persisting in that, I thought I should easily succeed in the venture. Had the tree been out on level ground, any one of our party could have climbed out to the nest in three minutes. All I had to do was to keep out of my head the awful space below. I might look upward into space, for that I was accustomed to.

I was barefoot, and stripped to undershirt and drawers. A silk handkerchief was bound tightly around my head. Amid a silence that was almost breathless I advanced to the verge of the cliff, and dropping to the ground, crawled astride the trunk of the little projecting cedar. I fixed my eyes on the young eagles, and would see nothing else.

It was ten feet out to the nest. Soon I was out to where the branches put forth from the trunk and, spreading fan-like, formed the platform on which was the nest. I could almost reach it. The old eagles screamed nearer and nearer, and I could hear the whistling of the feathers in their wings as they swooped to and fro above my head.

The young eagles soon became alarmed. They reared up, spread their wings, and opening their great mouths, began to make a hissing noise. This appeared to enrage the parent birds, and one of them came so low as to brush my head.

Thus far I had not ventured to look up toward the old birds. Seated astride a pole only eight inches in diameter, I was not in a position to look aloft. Let any one make the experiment in a safe place on level ground, and he will at once discover that it is difficult to retain his balance—to escape toppling over.

After being touched by one of the old birds, I saw

that it was absolutely necessary to pay some attention to them, or I should be struck on the head and knocked off my slender perch. Reaching out with my left hand to where the limbs put forth, I grasped one that was about two inches in diameter. Thus anchored, I was at liberty to make some use of my right hand. I must finish the fight with the old eagles before touching the young ones.

Drawing my bowie-knife, I held it above my head, and when next one of the old birds swooped down at me, I struck it somewhere on the body, cutting out a little shower of small feathers.

Either the glitter of the knife or the upward motion of my arm frightened the young eagles. Both hopped out of the nest, and went fluttering downward and away. Down, down they went, their wings but half-supporting them in a feeble flight that carried them toward the opposite side of the cañon, with the old birds dashing headlong after them.

I turned my eyes to watch the course of the eaglets, and in doing so for the first time caught sight of the milky water of the river and the rock-strewn earth toward which the birds were half falling—the earth and the stream dimly seen far, far below.

In that downward glance of a moment, my eyes had taken in the awful depth that lay below me. In an instant, terror—the terror of the awful space beneath—seized and overwhelmed me. I felt impelled to pitch headlong downward into the chasm, and at once terminate the torture which knowledge of the great gulf below me inflicted upon every nerve and muscle of my frame.

The knife dropped from my hand into the abyss, and the self-command that I still retained was barely sufficient to give me such control of my senses and use of my muscles as to permit of my tightly closing my eyes and bending forward until my breast rested upon the solid substance of the spreading branches of the tree.

That last half-instinctive action was all that saved me. Had I remained upright astride of the tree-trunk

another moment open-eyed, I should have ended the torture that throbbed through every nerve of my body and brain by throwing myself at once into the space below that so thrilled me.

With my breast upon the boughs and each hand firmly grasping a thick branch I lay with closed eyes, determined not to make another move until I had become composed and regained sufficient self-possession to do what remained to be done in order to escape with my life.

The eaglets being gone, it only remained for me to make my way back to the brow of the cliff and to the firm rock. Without moving, I mentally glanced over the route. That which immediately occurred to me was that I was faced the wrong way. I could not well go backward and make a safe landing upon the brow of the cliff; I must turn and get my face toward the top of the wall.

I studied over the manœuvre that would be necessary to place me in the desired position. I saw that it would involve my having for a short time both legs on one side of the trunk of the tree; that for a moment, I should be seated sidewise upon it, as a woman sits upon a horse. It would be no trick at all performed on a pole in a gymnasium. It was wholly in the thousand feet of space below me that the trouble lay. I therefore determined to perform the feat of reversing my position with my eyes shut. The branches which my hands grasped were about two feet apart, which would give me a good deal of purchase.

When I felt myself thoroughly nerved for my manœuvre of facing about, I accomplished it almost in an instant, that I might have no time in which to think of the perilous position it involved.

Not until I had again firmly clasped the trunk of the cedar with both hands did I venture to open my eyes; and then I directed them in advance so that they would rest upon the edge of the cliff at the root of the tree.

As I completed my reversal-feat, I had heard a sort of tumultuous cry from my friends on the cliff—the

first sound I had yet heard from them—which I took to be a sort of spontaneous outburst of applause, but when I opened my eyes, I saw at once that it must have been a cry of horror.

My tree was rapidly sinking—was giving way at the roots. Now that my attention was directed to what was occurring, I could hear the cracking of small roots as the tree settled down and swung in toward the wall. I could no longer see any one on top of the cliff, for I was already several feet below its brow. I could see the earth crumbling and dropping from the brow of the cliff as the roots of the trees stretched in the ground.

Each moment I expected the tree to tear loose and carry me with it to the bottom of the abyss. Strange as it may seem, I did not in this situation experience any such feeling of terror and horror as that which for the moment overwhelmed me when I looked down after the falling eaglets. The calmness of desperation now took possession of me. There was no more of the tingling and thrilling of the nerves. All would doubtless be over in a few seconds, and I was braced for the shock. I knew the worst and was prepared to endure it. I even looked down to the rocky floor of the cañon a thousand feet below without a tremor. Space gaping beneath no longer had any terrors for me. I was already no better than a dead man.

But the roots of the tree did not tear loose as I had expected to see them do. When the top of the tree had turned directly downward the roots still held, and I clung to it ten feet below the verge of the cliff. I was astride the trunk just at the point where the main boughs, spreading out like the ribs of a fan, supported the whole weight of my body; indeed, the trunk of the tree being about eight inches in diameter, I could not so clasp it except with my arms as to sustain any weight.

The tree did not hang flat against the vertical face of the cliff. There were projecting branches that kept it about three feet away from the wall. In this position it stopped; and as the roots still held, I began to hope that they would continue to hold until I could be

rescued; however, with the least motion or agitation it might give way at any moment.

Finding that I was not to be instantly hurled down to death, I presently ventured to lift my eyes to the brow of the cliff. I could see no one, nor could I hear the voices of my late companions. I began to fear that I was deserted. Having seen the tree sink down out of sight, they probably believed it had fallen and carried me with it to the bottom of the cañon. Not one of them would have the nerve, in view of the happenings of the day, to come to the brink and peer over in search of me.

I looked upward along the trunk of the tree, meditating as to whether an attempt to climb it would be likely to prove successful. I saw at once that to escape in that way would be impossible.

Even though I should be able to climb the trunk, I could do nothing when I came to the brow of the precipice. I also feared making even the slightest motion —the least jar might cause the tree to give way.

My thoughts then again turned to my friends. My soul sickened at the thought that they might have gone away—gone up to the flume-camp to report the latest accident.

I was scanning the line of the cliff as far as my eyes could follow it, in the hope of seeing one of my party out at some curve, when I heard a voice far above me, in the sky, as it sounded to me: "Are you still alive and safe?" it said.

Was I "still safe"? It seemed a cruel joke.

I turned my face upward to answer, but for a short time I hesitated. I feared that my mere exertion in shouting would so agitate the small tree as to tear loose its roots. At last, however, using my voice carefully, I cried: "Can you hear me?"

"Yes, plainly," was the reply.

"Well, then, I am still alive and on the tree, but not safe!"

"Hang on," came back. "Hang on, and we will try to save you!"

I looked up. No one was visible on the verge of the wall. They were afraid to approach it; afraid to stand where I would have given worlds to have been placed. What to them seemed a place of peril would have been to me as the Rock of Ages.

Again I was left to my thoughts and fears. I did not like this seeming desertion. It appeared to me to be very cowardly in them not to show themselves and stand by me. In such a situation, even the sound of the voice of a fellow-man is a comfort.

At last another voice—one that seemed almost by my side—called to me. I looked up and saw peering down at me over the brink of the precipice a face that I recognized as that of a young man named Peter Bowers.

"Hold on as you are," said young Bowers. "My brother John has gone back to the flume-camp on the best horse for a long rope. He will soon be back."

Good God! "Soon be back!" It was a mile-and-a-half to the camp. I must wait until a man had ridden three miles. Here was a wet blanket for me.

Somehow, when I saw a face within ten feet of mine, I had felt as though I was saved. I would be up on the cliff at once. Now they were going to make me wait until a man could ride three miles before trying to save me. It was rascally! Why not help me at once?

"Can't you drop me the end of a lariat?" cried I.

"No. We've only got one lariat. That's tied around me and the men are holding the other end."

"What is all that for?" cried I, in astonishment.

"Why, to keep me from falling over into the cañon."

"To keep you from falling! Good Lord! Why, aren't you safe enough anywhere up there on the solid rock?" sneered I.

"No. I can hardly stay here with the lariat fast to my waist. My head wants to go down and my heels feel as if they'd fly right up into the air in spite of all I can do!"

"What a cowardly set!" thought I. "All up there is so solid and safe, yet every man there is afraid to come near enough to give me the end of that lariat!"

But I was in no position to fight any one, therefore I softly said: "Surely they can come near enough to drop me the end of the lariat!"

"Yes, but who is to come to the edge to drop it to you if he is not held fast?—and we've got but one lariat."

I groaned.

After a moment's thought I said: "Where is Bob Paxton?"

Pete turned his head and looked.

"Out holding your horse," said he.

"Ah," said I, "he is always thoughtful. Bob is determined that I shall not go home on foot."

I was so mad that I did not much care whether the tree held or pulled up by the roots.

"Wait a bit and hold fast. Do have patience!" said Pete. "John will soon be here with the rope."

"Well, if I am to wait till then I wish you'd send me down a lunch. I saw Bob Paxton slipping some biscuits and cold meat into his pockets just before we left the flume boarding-house."

Pete's head disappeared. It may to some appear very unlikely that I talked and felt in my situation as I have reported. My situation was in truth so desperate that I also became utterly desperate; and coolly so. The brink of the precipice, which an hour before would have turned my head, was now as nothing. I could have danced along it from end to end. I could now gaze down into the chasm without a qualm. My greater danger, my imminent peril, had killed all the smaller dangers. To paraphrase Pope—

> Small dangers intoxicate the brain,
> But great ones sober us again.

My danger was so great that I was perfectly sobered by it. I was about the same as lost. There was, however, a chance of a rope's coming before the tree gave way, and I would make the best fight I could for that chance.

Again I was left alone, suspended between heaven

and earth. To add to the terrors of the situation gusts of wind began to sweep through the cañon and sway me and my tree. I was still keenly alive to whatever threatened the stability of my tree—if stability could be said to pertain to such a thing. Occasionally I could hear a root snap, and at times dirt fell from the edge of the cliff; as if the tree were slowly but surely giving way. All these things gave me very keen little starts and pangs, but had no power to overwhelm me—to upset my brain.

To find all drawing back from me and keeping out of sight disturbed me not a little. I thought they should have appeared to be doing something—might at least have given me the comfort of their presence. I have since seen how eagerly a man who is about to have the hangman's noose placed about his neck catches at a kind word or even a nod of recognition, and I know that the word and nod filled a yearning vacancy.

Finally, after, as it seemed to me, I had been hanging over my grave a month, I heard a great—a mighty cheer.

"John Bowers has come with the rope!" thought I.

Soon Pete Bowers again peered down at me and said: "They have got a long rope. They are going to tie one end of it to a tree, and will then make a noose in the other end and let it down to you. Hold on a little longer and we'll get you."

"I can hold on a month," said I. "I am well enough fixed for holding on, but what is the good of my holding on if the tree gives way? You fellows seem to think all depends upon me and my holding on. This tree is giving way all the time."

Pete withdrew to impart this information.

It seemed an hour before he again crawled to the brink—for he came by crawling on his belly. "I've got the end of the rope," said he, "but I'm afraid to come square over you to drop it. I'm afraid to go near the roots of the tree. The ground there is all cracked and loose."

"For God's sake, keep away from there!" cried I.

Then, "Can't you throw the rope so that the loop will pass beyond the trunk, and slide along down to me as it slacks in drawing back?"

Pete threw the rope, but it fell short. Again and again he tried. Once it came near me and I reached out and clutched at it. As I did so there was an ominous cracking above, and small clods of earth fell and rattled down through the branches of the tree that rested against the wall.

I clutched the tree, afraid to wink or breathe for some moments. Then I said to Pete: "What is the matter with you?—why can't you fling the rope as I told you?"

"I can't throw so hard."

"Why not?"

"If I do my heels will fly up and I'll go head first into the cañon!"

"What! With a lariat around you and a dozen men holding you?"

"Only four, and they'll let go and run if they see me go over. They say we've lost too many men already to-day to take any more chances."

"Oh, yes, I see!" said I, again beginning to forget that I was not on terra firma.

I thought a moment, and then said: "Tell the men to cut a long, slender pole; sharpen the upper end of it, then twist the strands of the rope at the noose backward and thrust in between them the point of the pole; then you can pass the noose down into my hands. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I'll have it fixed," and Pete withdrew.

In about ten minutes—it seemed to me as many hours—Pete was back with the pole and rope.

I clasped my legs tightly about the trunk of the tree in order to have free use of both hands.

Down, down came the noose at the end of the pole. I never saw a thing move more slowly. At last I clutched it, and with a death-grip. I soon had the noose over my shoulders and about my waist. I then

told Pete to haul up the slack. As soon as the noose tightened, I felt that I was safe.

With my left hand I took a vise-like grip on the rope above the noose and prepared to emerge.

"How many men are now holding you?" I asked Pete.

"Only three now."

"Can they hold you while you give orders?"

"I guess so."

"Well, don't let your heels fly up. How many men are holding me?"

"Four or five."

"And is the end of the rope still fast to the tree?"

"Yes, sir, still fast."

"Well, then, I may as well make a move and get out of here. However, now I think of it—where is Bob Paxton?"

"On the rope, sir."

"My rope or yours?"

"Yours, sir."

"Tell him that I'm hungry, and ask him to please to save for me the lunch he has in his coat pocket."

Pete opened his eyes in astonishment, but turned his head and gave the order. Though I felt almost as safe as if out on the brow of the cliff, I knew that the "space fright" still held Pete in its power and I did all this talking to try his steadiness before giving him my real business orders.

The first thing was to taut the rope in line; for Pete was still holding it. I told him to let go of it and tell the men to haul gently on it until I cried halt.

Pete did as directed and repeated my order when I called a halt. The rope did not lie directly in a line with the trunk of the tree, and I made him veer the men by motioning with his hand till it was right.

I had studied out the whole programme while waiting for the rope. I wanted to steady myself by the trunk of the tree in going up, instead of swinging in against the wall and banging about, as the butt and roots of the

tree would be of assistance in getting up to the crest of the cliff.

I explained this to Pete after the rope was in line and taut. Then I said to him: "Now, Pete, if you feel quite safe, we'll start up."

"I am ready, sir."

"Very well. Now repeat my orders to the men instantly and exactly as I give them."

"Yes, sir."

"Haul away steadily!" cried I.

The order was repeated and acted on. Up I went, calling out as I went: "Steady, steady!—not so fast!——steady, so!"

I made but one halt. That was when my head was on a level with the brink and at the point where I had partly to support my weight upon the butt of the tree in order to mount over the roots. After that a steady haul brought me upon the brink, when I lost no time in making a few rapid steps inland, where I tumbled down all of a heap.

I was weak as an infant.

"Water, water!" I murmured. "I'm so faint!" and I came near fainting in reality. Water was brought from a rill, and with it was mingled some brandy which Van Vrankin had remaining in his flask. Next I took a shivering-fit—I began to feel the cold—and was helped into my clothes. I was still too weak to stand alone, so sat on the ground for a time and rested. When helped to my feet, I rose the biggest coward in the crowd. A yoke of oxen could not have drawn me to the brink of the cliff over which Pete Bowers had thrust his head while helping me. Pete went out and got for me a piece of cedar root, to show me that it was almost as tough as a buckskin string. I thought it was very hardy of him to brave so much for so little.

At last I was able to mount my horse with some help, and we started for home, sending the rope back by some men who had come down from the flume-camp. In about an hour I was all right, the motion of the horse starting my blood again through all my veins.

It was not until we were almost in sight of Omega that any one ventured to speak of the bets I had won. I said that I wished never again to hear them mentioned —that I would hold the man to be my enemy that ever again said a word about the bets; and I felt and meant it. Strange as it may seem, while I was hanging in the tree and vexed with my friends for not doing more for me, I said to myself over and over again that if I ever got out alive I would exact from those fellows the last cent of every bet I had made.

My performance was not one that I was proud of, and for years it was not mentioned in my presence by any one who cared to be my friend.

As long as I remained in the town of Omega—even till the year 1860—when I saw myself pointed out and eyes following me, I thought it was being said: "There goes the blamed fool that went after the eagles' nest!"

Also, even to this day, the adventure often interferes with my sleep. Just when I am on the point of quietly entering the realms of dreamland, I find myself out on that cedar, see the young eagles falling, fluttering down, down into the awful abyss, and again I am thrilled in every nerve with the old "fright of space" yawning beneath me. It is true that I have discovered the cure for this fright, but it is "big medicine," and I don't hanker after it.

The following colloquy may or may not have taken place. If it did take place, there is involved, as every reader will admit, considerable fickleness, but great attractiveness, on the part of the young lady: much susceptibility—and magnanimity—on the part of the young man: and an almost incomprehensible lack of fidelity on the part of "Captain Bell": to say nothing of a singular combination of circumstances. However, upon reflection, fickleness, attractiveness, susceptibility, and magnanimity are not so very rare: and singular combinations of circumstances abound on every side. "An Express Idyll" was written by Arthur Griffiths, and first appeared in *Murray's Magazine*. In laughing over the fun in the amusing situation which he has described, it may be well to remember that stranger things have happened.

AN EXPRESS IDYLL.

SCENE, York Station. Time, 3 P.M. The South Express, known commonly as "The Flying Scotchman," is at the platform, and on the point of starting.

He has taken his seat, and is snugly ensconced in the far end of a first-class compartment. He is straight from the moors—the "dittos," deer-stalker cap, gun-case in rack, show that; a gentleman, young, well-born, well-to-do—all these are indicated by his bright, handsome face, aristocratic features, and altogether prosperous, self-satisfied air.

He—There—3:5! Safe to be alone as far as Grantham. I think I may smoke. (Takes out cigarette-case and lights up. Suddenly the carriage door is thown open.)

Guard (frantically)—In with you, miss—train is moving! All right! (to engine-driver. Whistles.)

She (falling into her place like a bundle of old clothes)—Ah! (hysterically.) Oh, what a fool I've been! (Bursts into a paroxysm of tears.)

He (mentally, interested at once)—My word! Here's a rum go! Poor dear, how she sobs! (Ex-

amines her attentively.) Quite the little lady, too! Neat turn-out; good fit. Wish I could see her face!

She (raising her head, and with a quick gesture tearing at her hat, which she throws off, as though it hurt her)—Oh, the cur! To think I should have believed in him, trusted him! The coward! the cur!

He (mentally)—There's a him in it then. A bad lot, too, I take it, to have ill-used so sweet a "her." Clear skin, nice face, and what eyes! The tears improved them, I think. (Their eyes meet.) Hope you do not mind (aloud, with an almost imperceptible wave of the cigarette.)

She (absently)—Mind what? You? (abruptly.) Not in the least!

He (meekly)—I meant the smoke. I never presumed to think you would object to me or my presence here. Besides, it's not my fault quite. I'd leave the carriage if I could.

She—Oh, I'm sure I don't care! Why should I care—for anything? I'm far too miserable. (A fierce sob.)

He (seriously)—I am so sorry for you! You seem in terrible trouble. Is there anything I can do for you? I hardly like to intrude, but no man—no gentleman—could see a lady in such distress without offering his help.

She (gratefully, but with fresh tears)—You are very good, very kind; but if you would please leave me alone—leave me to my own thoughts——

He—They cannot be pleasant thoughts, I'm sure. Far better look at the papers. Will you have "Punch," or this week's "World"? They're both here.

She—I could not see to read them, thank you.

He—Then let me talk to you. (Rises and moves a seat nearer.)

She—No, no; you must not talk to me! I don't know who you are. I've never seen you; never met you before.

He—Let me introduce myself then. My name is Fitz-Hugh.

She—That's not enough. Some one else must introduce you.

He (raising his hand to the communicator)—Shall I stop the train and get the guard to introduce me? He knows me.

She (laughing, in spite of herself)—No, please. That would make us both look ridiculous. I will accept the inevitable. I know some Fitz-Hughs (a pause)—but I don't like them.

He—A bad look-out for me! Hope they're no relations of mine. What part of the country?

She—Oh, near us: near—— But I have hardly met them; only I hear such things about them from my guardian; it is he who is always abusing them. They are such disagreeable neighbors, he says; the mother gives herself such airs, and the sons are so stuck up.

He—That must be painful for them. Are there many of them, and are they all like that?

She—Three or four are. I don't know about the eldest; I've never seen him at all. No one has much. He owns the estates, has the title, but he's always away, shooting or travelling about the world. He's half a wild man, I believe.

He—What a curious person! I should be very sorry to resemble him. And I don't think I'm at all stuck up. So your guardian hates the Fitz-Hughs? Perhaps it is a little his fault.

She—I dare say. He's horrid! I can't bear him!

He—Won't let you do foolish things, perhaps?

She (blushes crimson)—What do you mean?

He—You've just been doing something foolish, haven't you? I don't want to presume—I would not force your confidence for the world—but, you know, confession is good for the soul.

She (still scarlet)—I certainly shall tell you nothing! I wonder how you dare to ask! You are taking a very great liberty. I think you are exceedingly rude.

He—No—indeed no! Nothing was further from my intentions. I only thought I might be able to help you. I should be so glad to be of use. I mean it. Won't you trust me?

She—Oh, I can't! I can't talk of it! I think—

(breaks and sobs outright)—I think I am the most wretched, miserable girl alive!

He (soothingly, tenderly)—You poor, dear child! What is it then? What has vexed you? Don't cry. Come and tell me all about it; you'll be ever so much better then. What did he do?

She (quickly, looking up at him through her tears)—He? How do you know? Were you at Scarborough? I never told you about Captain Bell.

He—Yet I knew. Of course I was certain there must be a he: what else would make a little woman cry? But he's not worth it, I assure you. Treat him with the contempt he deserves. He's a low snob.

She—How do you know that? Where have you met him?

He—I never met him in all my life, and yet I know exactly what he has done. I consider him an utter cad, and I hate him!

She—Why, what has he done to you?

He—Nothing to me. It's what he's done to you. He has treated you most infamously! I know that.

She—I never told you so.

He—You said—well, you implied something of the sort—at any rate I can make a shrewd guess. Shall I tell you what I think occurred?

She—You may talk any nonsense you please.

He—It is not so bad to talk as to act nonsensically. But listen. Is this right? You met Captain Bell at Scarborough, he paid you great attention, you fancied yourself in love with him—don't interrupt me, please. Then he humbugged you into believing that he was desperately in love with you, and he persuaded you to meet him at York Station so that you might run away. Shall I go on?

She (with hanging head, her ungloved forefinger following the pattern of her cloth skirt)—I cannot prevent you.

He—But you'd rather not hear? I am not such a brute, I hope, as to insist. I only wanted to show you

that I knew what I was talking about, and to prove the interest I take in you.

She (shyly)—You are very good, I'm sure. I don't understand why you should be so kind. You are a perfect stranger——

He—Don't be too sure of that. I know you, and have known you—at any rate of you—all your life, Miss—Brignolles.

She (starts and blushes deeply)—Who are you? At any rate, I don't know you.

He—Your nearest neighbor at home, Lord Fitz-Hugh—the half-wild man.

She (stammering and in great confusion)—Dear, dear, how stupid I've been. You are not annoyed, I hope? But you see I could not know, could I? And—and——

He—I did not look half wild enough, eh? Well, I'll forgive you, but only on condition that you tell me, honestly, what you think of me.

She—Oh, I could not, really! It's quite impossible. You see, I, I—I have not come to any decided opinion; it's far too soon. I hardly know you at all. Why, we have not been together, in this carrage I mean, more than five or ten minutes.

He (taking out his watch)—One hour and three-quarters, Miss Brignolles, that's all.

She—I could not have believed it. The time has positively flown.

He—Pleasant company, perhaps? Or have I no claim to that compliment? Anyway, I'm afraid—we have just a quarter-of-an-hour before we reach Grantham—you won't enjoy that last quarter-of-an-hour so much as the rest.

She—Why not? Why should it be any different?

He—Because—you will not be very angry, I hope—I am going to read you a lecture; to speak to you very seriously. Don't frown; what I am going to say is entirely for your good. I am going to take you to task.

She (stiffly)—By what right, Lord Fitz-Hugh, do you presume to interfere in my affairs?

He—I have no right; I make no claim to it, but I shall do it all the same, and before we get to Grantham. After that I will change carriages, and I will not inflict myself on you further, if you so wish. But now you must, you shall listen to me.

She (coloring, but with a brave, rather angry voice)—Is this generous, Lord Fitz-Hugh? Is it gentlemanlike?

He (in a grave, solemn voice)—It is my duty to point out to you——

She (hotly)—How so? You have no authority over me. What you call duty I call impertinence.

He (stolidly continuing)—My duty as an old friend——

She—Not of mine.

He—Of your family, your father and mother. I knew them both, and owe both many kindnesses—your mother especially, for I was, like you, motherless when quite young. What would your dear mother have said, Miss Brignolles, to this escapade? Would you have put her to such pain? Or your father, so strict and honorable?

She (rather nervously)—Don't, don't, please; say no more. It's too cruel.

He—You might have made a most terrible, irreparable mistake. You rashly, foolishly, put yourself, all you possess, all you hold most dear, entirely at the mercy of a selfish, designing scoundrel.

She (looking at him bravely, but with tearful eyes and quivering lips)—Is it necessary, is it kind, is it chivalrous, to go on like this? I was wrong, I know I was wrong, but I am so miserable. Oh—Oh—— (breaking down completely and sobbing hysterically, hides her face in the cushions).

He (quite concerned)—I had no idea. I am so sorry. I have gone too far—but never mind. Don't think of it again; I will make it all right, only do not cry so bitterly. What on earth shall I do with her? (Finding his words have no effect, takes her ungloved hand and pats it hard, then, with a sudden impulse, lifts it to his lips and kisses it.)

(Now the train begins to slacken speed, and just as it runs in at Grantham platform, she recovers herself.)

She (faintly)—Where am I? What has happened? (Then finding her hand in his, draws it quickly away.) Oh, Lord Fitz-Hugh, how wicked, how unfair!

He (much confused)—I thought you had fainted. I did not know what to do. Let me get you something—a cup of hot tea. (Jumps hastily from the carriage, which is nearly the last of the train, and runs up the platform to the refreshment room.)

One Railway Official (to another)—That's them; you may take your oath.

The Other—Sure enough. Why, I saw him kissing of her, right opposite the window, as bold as brass, just when the train ran in.

First Official—Best call Mr. Perks; I'll stay by the compartment.

Second Official—And I'll watch my gentleman.

(Lord Fitz-Hugh returns, followed by a page boy, with tea, fruit, cakes.)

Lord F. (entering the carriage)—Here, hand it all over—pay with that and keep the rest. What do you want? You can't come in here (to a station superintendent in uniform). This compartment is engaged. We wish to be alone.

Mr. Perks (coolly, and rather insolently)—That is why I am coming in.

Lord F. (haughtily)—We'll soon see about that. Call the station——

Mr. P.—The station-master himself gave me my orders. I am to travel up to London with this young lady and her—her—her (at a loss)—that don't matter much. The officers of the court shall settle that when we get to King's Cross. So make way, please, or you'll both be detained.

(The train moves on. Lord F. looks in utter amazement at Miss Brignolles, who by this time has quite recovered. She is drinking her tea with great relish, her face most demure, but a merry twinkle in her eyes.)

Miss B. (looking up suddenly and meeting his bewildered gaze)—I'm afraid it's rather serious. The court won't be trifled with——

Mr. Perks—As you'll find.

Lord F. (turning on him hotly)—Look here, leave us alone, or I'll pitch you out of the window. You've no station-master now at your back. (To Miss Brignolles, in a whisper.) What does it all mean? What court?

Miss B. (also whispering)—The Court of Chancery. I'm a ward.

Mr. Perks—Whispering ain't allowed.

Lord F. (suddenly bursting into a good-humored laugh)—Come, come, my good fellow, let's make friends, I shan't have another chance, you know. I suppose they'll separate us at King's Cross.

Mr. Perks (jauntily)—No fear. You'll find your carriage waiting—Black Maria, and attendants, a couple of 'em, who will give you every assistance—to Holloway Gaol.

Lord F. (who has taken out his purse)—You're married? I thought so. Do you remember when you were courting? Ah! Well, then, do a friendly thing. Let's have our talk all to ourselves.

Mr. Perks (grinning and fingering the five-pound note)—I can't find it in my heart to say no. A real pair of turtle-doves.

Lord F.—You know I shall be shut up for ever so long; I may not see my sweetheart again for months.

Miss B. (protesting sotto voce)—You are getting on too fast, Lord Fitz——

Lord F. (in a quick whisper)—Hush, hush! Not that name, please, or you'll spoil all. I am playing a part—that of Captain Bell. I don't know his Christian name, but call me Freddie, dearest Freddie, if you don't mind. (Aside) I shall not. And you must let me call you—Emmeline, isn't it?—or my love, my own darling love, my sweetest pet, just to keep up the pretence.

Miss B. (with a heightened color, but laughing)—

You must have played the part before, Lord—Frederick, I mean—it comes so pat.

Lord F.—But you must play it, too—we must pretend—(mentally) hanged if there's much pretence on my part—pretend that we are in love with each other.

Miss B. (with a coquettish shake of her head)—Oh, I couldn't, really! It would be really too absurd, and altogether too difficult.

Lord F.—Not for me. (Tries to take her hand, but she resists.) I assure you it's in the part. True lovers always hold each other's hands. Didn't Captain Bell ever do it? Lucky dog, how I wish I were he; that is, if you still care for him.

Miss B. (emphatically)—I don't, I never did, I believe; only he was so persevering, and I thought him better—less hateful, I mean—than the other.

Lord F. (deeply interested)—There was some one else, eh? Tell me all about it. It will be a relief perhaps; at any rate, it will help you to pass away the time—prevent you from feeling bored.

Miss B.—I'm not easily bored; but I will tell you, if you like. It was my guardian's son, Archie Quibble, a lawyer like his father—not nice at all—like his father in that, too. They had him down with them at Scarborough, and did all they could to bring us together. I saw it directly; but I couldn't bear him.

Lord F.—An eye to the main chance—the Quibbles.

Miss B.—They wanted me to engage myself, but keep it quiet till after I was twenty-one—next year. And they bothered me so, I fell back on Captain Bell. He was very kind, and I thought I liked him—and what was I to do? I seemed to be quite friendless.

Lord F.—You don't feel like that now, I hope? (Looking at her earnestly, and again taking her hand, this time without opposition, although presently she withdraws it.) Have I offended you? I should be sorry to do that. I want you to look upon me as a friend, as your very best friend. Do you believe that? I will prove it yet.

Miss B. (dropping her eyes, after one eloquent

glance at his)—I think you are very kind to me, too kind, kinder than I deserve, Lord Fitz——

Lord F.—Freddy, please. You needn't mind. It's my real name. Do you like it as well as Captain Bell's? What was his?

Miss B.—Something horrid. What does it matter? I never want to hear it or see him again.

Lord F.—You will have to hear the name of Bell once or twice more. Remember, I am Captain Bell. I shall presently answer to it, be taken into custody as Captain Bell, and spend the night in prison.

Miss B. (excitedly)—Oh, no, no, no! You must not suffer that ignominy. You must say who you are. If you don't, I shall. I should never forgive myself if you were so awfully punished for some one else's fault.

Lord F.—It won't hurt me, my dear child; I have gone through far worse. A night in gaol—I shall have a bed—is luxury to what I've endured on the prairies or in the desert or on the African veldt. Besides, even if it is far worse, it is necessary, indispensable. It is the only way to save appearances, to put you quite right with the Court and before the world.

Miss B. (in a frightened, timid voice)—How? What do you mean? What shall you do?

Lord F.—Go to jail like a lamb—as Captain Bell. To-morrow they'll drag me before one of the Vice-Chancellors—as Captain Bell. His lordship will read me a severe lecture, and, still as Captain Bell, sentence me to six months, a year perhaps, for contempt of court.

Miss B.—That is the awful part of it, and I—I mean we—I mean your friends—will not see you for all that time.

Lord F.—And you would be sorry for that, wouldn't you? Well, I can promise you shall see me again within three days, for I shall laugh in the judge's face and point out the mistake he has made. They'll soon let me go, you may depend. Even if they were inclined to be disagreeable, and the judge might say——

Miss B. (anxiously)—What?

Lord F.—That the whole thing was planned; that

Captain Bell was a man of straw; that you came really to meet me at York Station.

Miss B. (blushing crimson)—Oh, Lord Fitz-Hugh!

Lord F.—Freddy, if you please. Why are you so shocked? Would it be very much against the grain if I tried to supplant Captain Bell? What would you say to me if I asked you?

Miss B.—(almost inarticulate).—Oh, don't; please don't!

Lord F.—Well, if I asked the Vice-Chancellor, I don't think he would say "No,"—provided I may tell him that you agree.

Miss B. (in a low voice)—But suppose he did say "No"; he is very stern, very hard to please. That is why Mr. Quibble wished to wait till I was twenty-one.

Lord F. (complacently)—I think I can satisfy him I am an eligible parti. I have no fears of him. But you, may I hope, will give me what I want? This. (Once more taking her hand and kissing it as he draws her toward himself.)

Miss B.—Oh, oh, you mustn't——

Mr. Perks (gruffly, becoming very official)—Come, drop that; 'tain't in the contract. Besides, we're just running into King's Cross. Maybe the Lord Chancellor himself's on the platform. What would he say if he caught you at it?

(The train glides slowly in; porters accompany it, running alongside; there is a crowd, expectant, cabs and carriages in the distance, and some excitement.)

Mr. Perks—You'll just keep your places, please, while I make my report.

(Leaves carriage, which he locks behind him, and stands there till he is joined by a small posse of people, the station-master, followed by two tipstaves of the Court of Chancery; last of all, a fussy, plethoric-looking old gentleman.)

Mr. Perks (pointing his thumb over his shoulder)—There they are.

Old Gentleman—Take him. Handcuff him if he resists. You have your warrant.

Lord F.—Mr. Quibble, I think?

Old Gentleman—Lord Fitz-Hugh!

Lord F.—At your service. The young lady—let me hand her over to you; my duty is done. I have escorted her safely to town. And these gentlemen—friends of yours? What do you want? (to the tipstaves.)

First Tipstaff—We arrest you, Captain Bell.

Mr. Quibble (hastily interposing)—No, no: it' all a mistake. This is Lord Fitz-Hugh. Don't touch him; an action would lie for false imprisonment.

Lord F.—So I should think (haughtily). Who dares to interfere with me? Stand aside! Good-day, Mr. Perks, I will represent your service to the directors. Au revoir, Miss Brignolles. I shall do myself the pleasure of calling on you to-morrow, at——

Miss B.—Mr. Quibble's, Bryanston Square. Come early, and (gaily looking at Mr. Quibble) stay to lunch.

Mr. Q. (hesitatingly)—Oh, I should be delighted, honored, but my wife is out of town, and all my establishment. I fear it will be hardly possible——

Lord F.—Never mind; don't apologize. I'll take her out to lunch instead. We'll ask the Vice-Chancellor. He shall do propriety. Good-by. I see my brougham over there.

(Exit, after shaking hands warmly with Miss Brignolles, leaving Mr. Quibble, Perks, and the tipstaves looking at each other in breathless, speechless, hopeless amazement, while Miss Brignolles laughs aloud in childish glee.)

. . . . . .

(After many more scenes, various as in every love-suit, the curtain falls to a tableau; interior of St. George's, Hanover Square—fashionable wedding in progress.)

Bishop of N.—And wilt thou, Emmeline, take this man, Frederick, etc.—

It is easier to get arrested for nothing than one would at first imagine; as is shown conclusively in this amusing story, which is translated by Sophie Earl for ROMANCE from the French of Henri Paget.

PRINCE KARINVAL'S WAGER.

TOWARD the end of the second Empire, Prince Edmond de Karinval was one of the most brilliant frequenters of the Boulevard des Italiens.

Very blond, pale, tall and slender, imperturbably phlegmatic,—a temperament touching zero,—with the aid of his enormous fortune he amused society by his freaks and fancies, even condescending occasionally to astound the populace.

One evening he gave a grand dinner at his own mansion; the cheer was exquisite, and the dessert was served in a whirl of gayety.

"Very well; let us wager," cried the prince suddenly, replying to a challenge from the opposite end of the table, "that without having stolen, murdered, injured my fellow-beings in any way, without having committed any sort of crime, broken any law or regulation, I get myself arrested when I please and dragged to a station like a vagabond, a thief, an assassin!"

He spoke in the icy tone from which he never departed, even when making the most extraordinary statements or propositions, and his words cut clearly through the laughter and conversation. Every one turned toward him in surprise. During the silence which followed he added:

"I wager two thousand louis—who will take it up?"

There were wealthy men around the board, well used to heavy stakes; but the magnitude of the sum startled them. Before taking up the wager they wished to determine the conditions clearly.

"There is no double-meaning?—no play on words, or anything like that?" queried the fat Duke de Morvella.

"Not in the least," replied the prince; "I give you my word as a gentleman."

"But," suggested another, "you will probably proceed to do one of those actions which, without being classed as offences, yet arouse the police. As, for example, you will show yourself in public in such an extravagant or remarkable costume that you will be followed by a crowd of jeering urchins, and, to put a stop to the disorder, an officer will be obliged to conduct you to a station, where he will lend you less conspicuous attire."

"You are quite wrong," replied de Karinval; "for if I should get myself taken up for wearing some extraordinary costume, the officer would know very well that he had only to deal with an eccentric character, an oddity otherwise inoffensive. No; I tell you they will grasp me by the collar and drag me to the station, believing they are conducting a malefactor, while I shall be perfectly innocent of any fault or misdemeanor, transgressing no enactment."

"Well, then, how will you go about it?" exclaimed Gastambide, the banker, who was very nervous and excitable.

"Ah, that—is my secret! You can understand that if I told you that beforehand——"

"Of course!" interrupted Gastambide; "but I have it now! You will tap a policeman on the shoulder, saying: 'Old fellow, I'm your man. I have killed all my family in a moment of frenzy. Remorse is choking me. Take me up, old fellow, let the law do its worst!"

They shouted with laughter. The idea of the Prince de Karinval tapping a policeman on the shoulder, calling him "old fellow," and begging relief for his remorse awoke the wildest merriment. The prince alone preserved his cool gravity. He explained quietly to the impetuous banker that his intention was not only to abstain from evil-doing, but even to avoid any words or actions capable of provoking his arrest. And he repeated:

"Who takes up the two thousand louis?"

"I do!" cried Gastambide with an exuberant gesture.

The next day, about seven o'clock in the evening, when the boulevards swarmed with people and the restaurants began to fill up, a shabby wretch made his way through the crowd with bent head and watchful gaze, picking up, here and there, the cigar-ends that others threw away.

The man was still young, and had evidently fallen from a higher rank, to judge from the distinction of his pale, refined face, his patrician hands, his general bearing. Very tall and thin, he must once have been an elegant figure in society. Now he was reduced—by what vice or misfortune?—to old shoes with broken elastics, down at the heel and patched on the toe; to trousers shiny at the knees, and frayed around the hems; to a wretched coat, faded and worn, which was buttoned to the throat to conceal the lack of linen. An old felt hat, which looked as if it might have been fished from a rubbish-heap, slouched over his head, and perhaps to give himself the illusion of a shirt collar, or maybe under the influence of old habit, he had tied around his neck an old black silk cravat which looked as if it might have been worried by a family of playful puppies.

Still, it was evident that this unfortunate man was not discouraged or despairing, for in all his misery there was a certain care and cleanliness not usually apparent in men of his class.

As he passed before Vigneron, a restaurant then very fashionable, he stopped for a few seconds to look in at the clear windows with their guipure hangings, through which he could see the diners seated opposite to richly dressed ladies, and dividing their attentions between the exquisite viands and their fair companions. At this moment a gentleman and lady got out of a carriage, and entered the dining-room. Through the open door the shabby man could see a centre-table laden with fruits and early vegetables, while toward him wafted that odor of repast, so dis-

agreeable to those who have just dined, so delectable to the hungry.

He advanced, and before the door closed, entered and timidly placed himself at the first empty table.

But he was scarcely seated when the head-waiter, a very distinguished and stylish-looking individual, perceived him and hurried toward him with an expression of annoyance.

"What are you doing there, you!"

"Why," replied the unfortunate, pointing to the other guests, "I come to eat, like all these people."

He spoke so seriously that it was impossible to think he had been drinking. The head-waiter concluded that he must be weak-minded, and said sarcastically:

"You have mistaken the hour and the door, my good man; the soup-kitchen is around the corner, and the soup is dispensed in the morning." He shook his napkin at the intruder to chase him off, as one would a troublesome fly. His appearance certainly did not grace the establishment. But the other did not seem disposed to quit his place.

"I don't care much for soup," he answered, "and the food given out in the morning would not suit me."

The head-waiter was struck with the purity of his accent and the refinement of his tone. "This is no born vagabond," he thought; "it is some man of position, ruined by gambling."

"And," continued the shabby one, "there is no reason why you should not serve me a dinner when I am ready to pay for it. There—if you have any doubt—there is my pocket-book." He opened his old coat, and from an inside pocket drew out a pocket-book stuffed with bank-notes. Selecting one, he handed it to the waiter.

"You may look at it closely; you will see it is not a counterfeit."

It was a note for a thousand francs; and there were at least fifty others in the purse, to judge from its volume. The waiter took it, and scrutinized it for several instants, with wide nostrils and meditative frown. Then abruptly raising his head, like a man who makes

a prudent resolution, he returned the bank-note to its owner.

The latter made a movement as if to rise, saying:

"Now if you refuse to serve me, I will go elsewhere."

But the head-waiter quickly begged him to remain.

"No, no; stay. Give your order." Then calling one of his subordinates, he pointed to the man. "Take this gentleman's order," adding rapidly in a low tone, "Do not lose sight of him. Do not let him go out." He presently disappeared.

Five minutes later, he returned, accompanied by a policeman.

All of the occupants of the restaurant had opened their eyes wide when the vagabond installed himself at the table, and had watched him since then with marked disapproval. No one doubted that it was he whom the officer had come to seek, and every head was turned to see what was going to happen.

Sure enough, the officer went directly toward him. He continued to enjoy a savory slice without seeming to notice the sensation he had created. He even started, like one suddenly awakened, when the man in uniform touched his shoulder.

"Eh? What? Is anything the matter?" He did not seem to understand.

They explained. Bank-notes for a thousand francs were not usually produced from such pockets as his. To have them he must have stolen them!

He defended himself energetically; but his protestations were in vain.

"I doubt if you can show a single paper or certificate of character!" observed the agent.

"It is true; I cannot. But probably none of these people present can immediately produce passports or proofs for identification."

"No certificates. You have at least a name. Come then, who are you?"

"I am the Prince Edmond de Karinval."

"Why not the King of England?" sneered the officer.

"England is governed by a queen," began the man.

"Enough, enough! no need for further explanations. Follow me!"

And grasping his shoulder with his large hand, the policeman forced him to rise and conducted him to the station.

The wager was won.

Then, from the lower end of the restaurant, the fat Duke de Morvella, the lively Gastambide, and the others, rose, followed, and interposed, explaining the adventure to the policeman.

He was so overcome with astonishment, so eager to apologize, and so confused, that, in his haste to bow them out, he thrust his cocked hat through a pané of glass, while bending low and murmuring indistinctly:

"Prince!——Prince!!"

There is probably no class of men among us who can tell so many thrilling yarns as the men in the Life-Saving Service. Here is one, written expressly for ROMANCE by Lieut. J. H. Scott, U. S. R. M.

THE MISSING MAN.

THE inspection of the Life-Saving Station was finished, and I was complimenting the Captain upon the efficiency of his crew, when it suddenly occurred to me that one of them, whom I had especially remarked at my last visit, was missing.

"What has become of the man you used to call Harry?" I inquired. "He was the strongest and handsomest fellow I ever saw—quick as a cat, and light on his feet as a feather. Has he left you?"

The Captain looked at me aghast.

"What! Haven't you heard about it?" he faltered. "No? Well, it's quite a story. If you've plenty of time, I'll tell you about it."

I had plenty of time, and wanted to hear the story, so we sat down near the door, and the Captain began:

"I suppose you recollect that long, fierce south-east gale we had last winter, don't you? Well, it blew from the south-east for two days, with heavy squalls of snow. It was bitter cold. Everything was covered with ice and snow, and the worst sea that I have heard of began tumbling up on the rocks.

"On the morning of the third day, the clouds began to break away, and the wind died down to a light gale. Almost all of the schooners in the Roads got under way, and started for Harchy Harbor. Some of the smaller ones had to put back, the sea being too heavy, but the larger ones kept on, and I suppose they made a good run of it, as the wind was fair.

"That night it started in to blow, as if it was possessed to blow the earth off its foundations. At ten

o'clock, it began snowing. The flakes were about as big as a fifty-cent piece, making it impossible to recognize anything over five feet away. The snow fell until about twelve, I think. After that it slowly began to clear up, and the wind came in gusts of diminished strength. At daylight it was blowing a moderate southerly breeze, and the sky was clear. We searched the shore and sea for signs of a wreck, but could not find any.

"I was just going to put the glass away, when my eye caught the waving of something on Daming's Island. As soon as the glass was brought to bear, I saw three or four men running around there. I suppose they were trying to keep themselves from freezing. There's the island off there—the one that is almost round.

"The island rises about twenty feet out of the water. The cliffs are almost straight up-and-down, with twenty-one fathoms of water at their base. But on the southern side there is a small beach, which is bare at low water. From this beach are projected two reefs that are awash at low tide. They form natural jetties, and they are about fifteen feet apart and parallel to each other. They extend out from the beach in a southern direction for about two hundred feet.

"I had the crew called, and everything was soon ready for starting. We decided that the only safe way for us to get the men off from the island would be for us to go as close as possible and, lying there, shoot the life-line to them and haul them through the surf to the boat. It was a rough way, but as there was no other feasible plan, we made our preparations for its execution. The only place on which a boat could land on the island was on that small beach, and to get there we would have to go between those jetties, and even in fine weather it was a risky job with such a large boat. With the sea then running, it was not to be thought of.

"As soon as I had seen every arrangement completed and the gear in place, we ran the boat out of the house, and succeeded in launching her without taking a drop of water on board. We had a long, tedious pull. It

was like walking in deep, loose sand. When we arrived at the island, we pulled around it once, looking for the most favorable position for us to work from. We decided that the mouth of the jetties would be the best place. So, taking our station there, we boated the two bow-oars, and Harry uncovered the gun and got her ready for use, while Bill looked out for the line.

"The noise was simply deafening, and the sea was a mass of froth and foam, as the waves dashed themselves on the reefs. Seeing a big wave coming, and looking as if it was about to break, I sung out, 'Stern all!' but, owing to the noise, they did not hear me, and, seeing me working as if for dear life at the steering-oar, they gave a stroke ahead, so that the wave would break astern of us.

"That stroke carried us between the reefs, and in the next instant the wave was upon us. Its light-green and semi-transparent sides towered high above us, while the foam on its crest overhung the boat, threatening to swamp us. The spectacle was so awe-inspiring that we were unable to move, but sat in our places with our eyes fixed on this almost irresistible mass. Each second was like an age. Would the boat never rise? She started to rise so suddenly, that she was almost perpendicular before we could realize it, and we were thrown in a confused heap against the forward bulkhead. We were now afraid that she would be thrown end over end, and for a few seconds we hung in that awful position, hurried along at an incredible speed. Then slowly the wave began to pass under us, and as soon as I could I grasped the steering-oar, and tried to steady her. When the wave had passed us, we found ourselves about two-thirds of the distance toward the beach and between the two reefs.

"Our oars, except the steering one, were broken. Before we could get the spare set out, the next wave was close astern. We were forced to drop everything and hold on for life. I had my feet jammed in the straps and laid her fair so that the wave would be broken on the stern. It broke, however, just before it

reached us, and in a mass of foam. Our boat was filled with water, and we were thrown on the beach.

"Fortunately, no one was hurt, and the boat was not injured. The suddenness of it all, for it happened in a very short time, rather dazed us, but we were thankful for having landed so easily.

"We bailed the boat out, and soon had her ready for launching again. But now came the question, how can we get her off? We could not row, as the blades of the oars would not catch on the rocks. They slipped over the slimy surface and gave us no purchase. We could not remain indecisive, as the tide was rising and the beach would soon be covered. We placed the shipwrecked crew in the boat, and endeavored to launch her, using the oars to pole her off; but the water soon deepened, and we were thrown back on the beach. Three times we launched the boat, and each time we were thrown back on the beach.

"By this time we were wet through and through. Our clothes were frozen and stiff as boards. We were discouraged, cold and exhausted. It was evident that the sea must go down before we could launch our boat and get away. But the tide was rising. The small beach would soon be covered and we should have to retreat up the cliffs and leave the boat, our only means of escape, to be dashed to pieces on the rocks. What were we to do? Here we were on a bare rock which was covered with snow, without a fire or any means of warming our almost frozen bodies. Nothing but death in a horrible form was before us.

"The cold was intense, and we were becoming numb. In order to warm our blood, I served out a big drink of whiskey all round. This seemed to start our blood moving once more, but it failed to raise our spirits. I thought of my wife and babies at home. What would they do when I was gone? I thought too of the warm fire, the dry clothes, and the comfortable bed at the station. I roused myself, for it would not do to give up. We must get off, but nobody could think of any way.

"As I thought, I became very much worked up, and

looked around for some one on whom I could vent my rage. I saw Harry sitting in a crevice of the cliff, calmly puffing away at his pipe. This somehow aggravated me. I walked over to him, and asked him if he was going to sit there like a blooming idiot and not do anything to help save himself and the rest of us.

"He stood up and his face turned pale, for I said a great deal more than I have told you about, but let that pass. He looked me all over. I thought he was going to strike me. Then, walking toward the boat, he said, as he passed me, 'I'll get you out of this scrape, but——' He was going to say something more, but evidently changed his mind. On reaching the boat, he made a bowline on the end of the line and, throwing it over his head and right arm, started for the reef. Before reaching it, he turned and said, 'Jerry, when I get out there and wave my hand, launch your boat and warp her out with this line.'

"Without another word, he began crawling out on the reef. We thought each wave would sweep him off. But after each one had passed over him, we would see him crawl out a little farther. Slowly and steadily he crawled to the outer point and signalled. Then, throwing himself on his face, he dug his hands and feet in the crevices and braced himself for the strain. The tide had risen, and he was now under water almost all the time.

"We launched the boat, and, the first time we tried, we warped her out far enough to use our oars, but it took time to do it.

"When we got to Harry, we tried to draw him to the boat, but we could not move him. We shouted and told him to let go, but he did not move. It was not until we pulled on him sideways that we got him to the boat.

"The fact was—he was dead."

It is said that "Lyddy Washburn" was a real character, and that the events of this story are, in the main, historical. It first appeared in *Harper's Bazar*, and is from the pen of Helen Lee Sargent. It may be worth while to remind the readers of this generation that our ancestors had a way of keeping the natal day of our liberty, even if we have not. If our young men were more generally required to enlist in the militia, and if a law were passed that great reviews should be held annually in every centre of population on the Fourth of July, the perplexing question might be solved, "How shall we celebrate the day?"

LYDDY WASHBURN'S COURTSHIP.

"THE prettiest girl in Franklin County." That was what they called Lyddy Washburn. Brown-haired, blue-eyed, pink-cheeked, red-lipped, of a tall and slender figure, and a graceful and spirited carriage, the youngest and only surviving daughter of a well-to-do farmer—what wonder that from far and near suitors came for Lyddy Washburn's hand? But "Law!" said that young woman, many times over, "there ain't no hurry at all about my marryin' and settlin' down"—which in those days was rank heresy, Lyddy's mother having been married at fourteen, and all Lyddy's mates being settled in homes of their own, leaving that independent young woman to the tender mercies of a younger set of companions by the time she was twenty-two years old. But Lyddy tossed her head, looked in her glass, and sang the more blithely over her wheel and her churn.

"Now, Lyddy," her mother said one day, "why don't you marry Jotham Hunter? He's a likely young fellow as ever lived, and sets consid'able store by you."

"Jotham Hunter!" laughed Miss Lyddy. "Law, mother, he's got red hair!"

"Wa'al, his heart's right," pleaded Mrs. Washburn.

"No use, mother," said her fractious daughter. "You can't get rid of me yet awhile; and don't ever say, 'Jotham Hunter' to me again."

"Wa'al, tell me one thing," said Mrs. Washburn, her ill-concealed anxiety making her voice sound strained and unnatural. "You hain't—now, Lyddy, you *hain't*, be you?—a-goin' to take Tart Taylor?"

A bright flush swept over Miss Lyddy's beautiful face.

"Who said I was a-goin' to 'take Tart Taylor,' Mother Washburn?" she said, a little sternly. "Better wait till I get a chance, I think! An' if I *was* a-goin' to 'take Tart Taylor,' I'd like to know what's the reason he ain't as good as Jotham Hunter?"

"Wa'al," said the old lady, slowly (she always began with "Wa'al"), "they do say that Tart can't keep from liquor; and though"—here Mrs. Washburn no doubt voiced the feeling of every body in those days—"though every man must have his dram, yet there ain't no sense in gettin' drunk at every raisin' an' trainin' an' cattle show, as they tell on Tart Taylor; an' he's got his mother to take care of; an' no daughter o' mine, Lyddy Washburn, shall ever live with that cross-grained, ugly old Aunt Betty Taylor!" and the old lady—for she was well along in years, Lyddy being the youngest of thirteen children—stood up defiantly before her daughter, her excitement giving her unwonted courage.

Lyddy Washburn's temper was roused, and she glanced at her mother with a contemptuous expression, like the spoiled child that she was.

"You'd better be savin' your advice, mother—" she began, in a high, clear voice, when suddenly a long shadow fell across the room from the doorway, and "Cap'n Tart"—(Mr. Tertius Taylor was called "captain" from the fact that he was an officer of the militia)—stood before them, with his hat in his hand.

Mrs. Washburn tossed her head, and turned away with a stiff nod, while Lyddy, with a heightened color and unwonted nervousness of manner, welcomed the stately new-comer, whose military bearing and critical taste in the matter of his female companions had set half the girls in the county wild over him. It had been easy to see for some weeks now that Captain Tart

had made up his mind to "have Lyddy Washburn," and that that captious damsel was more complaisant toward him than toward any of her other suitors.

It was now the middle of May. The lilacs were budded in the front door-yard, and the apple-trees pink with bloom—a dangerous time for young folks in the state of mind of these two, had thought cautious Mrs. Washburn, and, not approving the match at all, she had made up her mind to warn Lyddy in such a way that the immediate danger should be tided over; but by her precipitance she had ruined every thing, and she felt it, for the girl's blushes had convinced her that Lyddy's heart was touched by Captain Tart's manly graces, and perhaps by that very wildness which often seems to captivate when it should repel.

"The fact is," said Mrs. Washburn, retailing the story to her husband that evening—"the fact is, 'Liakim, our Lyddy's in love with that ere Tart Taylor. What ails the girl?"

"'Tain't no use," said sensible 'Liakim Washburn, who was too sleepy to argue, and too fond of Lyddy to think of opposing her—"'taint no use, Mirandy, a-meddlin' in love matters. What 'ud 'a' ben the use, now, a-meddlin' 'twix' you an' me?" and with this half-facetious, half-tender reminiscence the old farmer took up his candle and went to bed.

That afternoon quite a scene had taken place between "Cap'n Tart" and Lyddy, and though they did not know it, they passed that day the turning-point of their lives; for Lyddy, in her excited state, was just impressionable enough, and enough roused in his favor by her defense of Captain Tart to make this meeting the decisive one. But she did not forget herself.

"Won't you come in, Cap'n Taylor?" she said, cordially, and with apparent calmness.

"No, thankee," said Captain Tart, eyeing the old lady uneasily; "I come to see you a minit 'bout suthin. S'pose you walk down the border with me, an' look at them posies you was tellin' of down to Jerushy Willitts'."

So Lyddy got her sun-bonnet, and they strolled "down the border," where some daffodils and wonderful hyacinths, the only ones in town, and sent to Lyddy from Boston, were just then the horticultural wonder of the neighborhood.

"By the way," said Lyddy, gradually recovering her composure, "have you seen Jerushy Willitts since donation?"

"No, I hain't," said Captain Tart; "but I see Adonijah Brewer this mornin', an' he said Loisy Pettingill was a-goin' to hev a quiltin' next Wednesday, and o' course you'll be a-goin'. I come to see ef you'd ride home on my pillion, come night."

Lyddy hesitated. Captain Tart had never made so bold an advance as this, and Lyddy thought of her mother.

"Jotham Hunter hain't asked you, has he, Lyddy?" said Captain Tart, his forehead gathering in a scowl.

"No, no," said Lyddy, hastily. "I hain't had no invite myself yet, you know; but, law!" recklessly deciding to follow her own wishes in spite of her mother, "o' course I shall have, an' I might as well come home with you as any body, I s'pose. Here's the flowers."

"Purty, ain't they?" said Captain Tart, brightening up.

"Mebbe you'd like one for your button-hole," said Lyddy, the something within her which had been roused by her mother's words getting the better of her prudence. "Here's a pretty one"; and she broke off a little stalk which bore two twinkling blue stars, and twisting them with a sprig of southernwood which grew beside it, began to pin the posy on the lapel of Captain Tart's homespun coat. That ended the whole matter for the young man. Her bright hair was close to his shoulder, her pink face almost against his breast. His breath floated down in her face and made her bosom heave faster, as she made two or three efforts to fasten the refractory flowers, and the young man's eye glistened with a new tenderness. His heart was all aflame.

He thought of the "quiltin'," and the ride home afterward, and could scarcely wait as he thought. He decided that he must ask her then the final question, and with her flowers breathing up perfume into his face, and the remembrance of her tell-tale blushes in his mind, he felt that her answer could not be "No." Then, after lingering a moment at the door, he walked away, his heart full of love, Lyddy, and anticipation.

Wednesday came, and as the "invite" had decorously preceded it, Lyddy Washburn, with a party of merry girls, walked, as was the custom, the two miles to Loisy Pettingill's, to the quilting, arriving there at two in the afternoon, and setting bravely to work at once upon the gorgeous quilt, which was to be the chief adornment of Loisy's "outfittin'" at her approaching nuptials.

The great "quiltin' bars" folded together fast, as skillful fingers deftly sewed along the lines of the intricate pattern, and by five o'clock, when supper was announced, the quilt was reduced to so small a compass that "Miss Pettingill" insisted that everything should be put away before the young men came. "Loisy and the rest can finish it in no time to-morrow," said the hospitable lady, "and I'm afraid that ef you go ahead as you've ben a-goin', you won't have no appetite for them sugar doughnuts I've ben a-makin'."

"Law!" the girls all broke in, in courteous deprecation, "we hain't got along none; oughter 'a' had it off the frames an hour ago."

"You go 'long!" said Loisy. "That quilt's an awful big one, and amazin' hard to quilt; but I was bound I'd have one jest like Lony Travers's, and I *did*."

"Yes," said Lyddy, thoughtlessly, "and I mean to have one like it too."

"When is it goin' to be?" said Loisy, mischievously, while the curiosity of all made them gather more closely around Lyddy.

"Law!" said Lyddy, with a forced laugh, "I s'pose you didn't know that Uncle Dari Mallers and I was a-goin' to make a match."

"Uncle Dari Mallers" was the good-natured old hat-maker of the village, who had lived single all his life, because, rumor said, he had been jilted in his youth. He was a queer but popular old fellow, and Lyddy's joke, received with great laughter, diverted further attention from her matrimonial prospects, and they went out into the big kitchen to supper.

Such a supper! The "sugar doughnuts" adorned each end of the table, while a great "'lection cake" stuffed with plums was the center-piece. Generous pitchers of foaming cider were scattered here and there, while cold pork-and-beans, flanked by "rye an' injun" bread, formed a prominent feature of the entertainment. Great light biscuit, clear maple syrup, rich preserves of citron, cookies full of caraway, fennel, and anise seeds, gingerbread, mince-pies, apple-pies, and squash-pies—such was the feast which the delicate damsels who had officiated at the "quiltin'" were to taste before engaging in the revelry of the evening; and such was the digestion of the sex in the "good old times," I am not told that a doctor's bill, or even a nightmare, was at all apt to follow the free enjoyment of these substantial dainties.

The evening came. The girls had previously gone up into the big front chamber, with its lofty, puffy bed and high stiff bureau, to don such extra ribbons and trinkets as they had reserved for the edification of the young men who were expected shortly. Of course, they all had gold beads, and most of them big brooches containing a small painted likeness of some ancestor. Then there were several pairs of gold ear-rings; and the combs—the shell combs that towered half-a-foot above the smooth luxuriance of our grandmothers' coiffures—who can describe them?

One by one the young men were admitted at the clang of the great brass knocker—Jotham Hunter and Adonijah Brewer and Timothy Bassett and a dozen other brown-faced, square-shouldered young fellows who had never had a day's illness in their lives, and who, though they knew little Greek, were well versed

in such branches as were taught in the district schools of their section, and, better than that, had the industrious habits and the unbending integrity which have made our country what it is, and for the lack of which it is suffering to-day.

Among the rest came Captain Tart, and more than one knowing glance passed around as it was seen that in his button-hole he wore, in observance of the May-time, and in proud display of the favor of the most courted girl in town, the hyacinths and southernwood which every body knew were given him by Lyddy Washburn. He had preserved them carefully in water, and his love had grown with every whiff which he had drunk in of their intoxicating perfume.

Lyddy's heart beat faster with mingled pleasure and indignation as she saw her gift thus openly flaunted before them all, and she instinctively talked faster to Adonijah Brewer, the prospective bridegroom; but she could not long be angry, so utterly was her heart subdued by the tenderness she felt for Captain Tart, and the manly beauty of his face, which had won him the secret admiration of every girl in Clearpond; and when he came up a few moments later to beg her hand for a reel which was to be danced in the great kitchen, she went tamely enough. After the reel they "twirled the platter," and then the apples were brought out, and Farmer Pettingill mixed a bowl of his famous toddy, which he could make as no one in all the country round. The glasses were filled and refilled till the hilarity waxed rather noisy. Captain Tart had drunk his glass at a draught. Then he looked up and caught Lyddy's eye, in which there was a look that stopped him as he was about to take more. She was very pale, and hastily seeking her side, he said, tenderly, "Be you sick, Lyddy?"

"No, no," said Lyddy, her color coming back in great waves over her face. "The toddy's kinder strong; I can't drink mine. You ain't goin' to drink no more, Tart?" with a beseeching tone in her gentle voice which went to the young man's heart.

"Not if you don't want me to, Lyddy," he said.

"Well, please," and she turned away. There were too many looking at them to talk any longer.

Jotham Hunter saw it all, and his jealous heart sank within him.

"Tart ain't a-drinkin' so much as common to-night," he remarked with affected carelessness, to his neighbor, but loud enough to be heard all about him.

"No," said the other, a coarser-grained fellow than the rest, with a loud laugh, "but he'll be makin' up for it after he gits out o' Lyddy Washburn's sight."

"That's so," said Jotham Hunter, with angry emphasis, and with his face set toward Lyddy, who had heard every word, till her slim figure dilated and her eyes blazed at the young men in such a way that they were glad to drop the conversation at once.

After the toddy there was an uproarious game of "round the chimney," and though proud Lyddy Washburn did not always condescend to participate in the romping sport, she ran to-night, and received a kiss from Captain Tart, the memory of which thrilled her to her dying day; and then she set all tongues wagging by stubbornly refusing to catch Jotham Hunter—whose melancholy not even the toddy, nor the smiles of Jerusha Willitts, a young woman who affected him, could mitigate in the least.

Then it was nearing midnight, and the "quiltin' party" broke up, each young man taking his chosen "girl" to her home on horseback on a pillion behind him, and those unprovided for going in Farmer Pettingill's big hay-wagon.

The stars were bright and the air cool and bracing, and the smell of the green earth and the apple-blossoms set young blood astir. Lyddy sat firmly on her seat, perhaps clinging a little closer to Captain Tart than necessity demanded, and they jogged slowly along till the merry voices of the rest were lost in the distance. Then Captain Tart turned his horse into a lonely wood-road which led home by a roundabout way, and where they could talk without interruption.

"Oh, Tart!" said Lyddy, nervously, as she felt him give spurs to the horse when they neared the turning. "Be you goin' by the 'Lish Woodard farm?"

"Why not?" said Captain Tart, as though that were the only thing to do. "'Tain't muddy. I drove my cattle through there to-day: an', Lyddy," his voice growing deeper—"Lyddy, I've got suthin to say to you."

She could not speak, for something seemed to suffocate her, and they rode on in an electric silence through the deep shadows of fragrant pines and hemlocks till they came to a secluded spot, when Captain Tart vaulted in his saddle and faced her, folding her in his arms as he did so. Lyddy was frightened. It was well understood in the village that Lyddy Washburn allowed none of the liberties which were not strictly considered improprieties among the young folks of the place, and no young man could boast that she had ever given him a good-night kiss, or allowed him to put his arm about her going home from any of the parties which abounded during the gay country winters; and here, at twenty-two, she sat on Tart Taylor's pillion, pressed close against his breast, his handsome face caressing hers—and without a protest!

"Oh, Lyddy!" said Captain Tart, almost choking with the passion which overpowered him," I can't wait another minute till you tell me you'll marry me. Oh, Lyddy, you will, won't you?"

Lyddy lifted her beautiful face to his and gave him a kiss, and he knew that she was his. Then they said nothing for a long time, till they noticed suddenly that the horse had stopped, and was leisurely chewing on an old lilac bush which marked the spot where the "'Lish Woodard" homestead had once stood.

But they did not care. The stars, the night wind, laden with the May sweetness—it was heaven itself that they were riding through, completed by the kisses and caresses of an honest love. Captain Tart started up the shrewd horse, which fell into an easy canter. Then he said, anxiously, "Now, Lyddy, you'll ride on the pillion behind me, come trainin', won't you?"

On the pillion behind Tart Taylor! On training-day! Before every body! Yes, she would do anything for him. If he wished their engagement thus publicly proclaimed, she was willing. So she told him "Yes," and her mind went back to the training on the last Fourth of July, when he rode at the head of the "milishy," so straight and handsome that her heart fluttered at the thought that he was now her lover.

Suddenly there was a low noise, which made the horse start, and Captain Tart turn uneasily in his saddle. A low, fiendish laugh, and a muttered "The devil!" were all they heard afterward. Then there was a rustle in the bushes, and Captain Tart put spurs to his horse. The fleet creature darted on to the turning, when they rode down the turnpike like the wind, till they reached Farmer Washburn's great red house, where a light was burning in the kitchen for Lyddy. She was all a-tremble when her lover lifted her from the horse; but she saw no fear nor tremor in his eye or on his firm-set lips.

"Why, Lyddy, dear," he said, folding her tenderly to him, and soothing her with his great, rough hand, "didn't you know who that was in the thicket? Why, Lyddy"—and he paused and choked a little—"that was—that was"—she looked up at him in terror—"that was—my mother."

Then, before she could fairly enter the hospitable door, he had leaped to his saddle, and was gone. The horrid fright had shattered their love dream, and spoiled the beautiful evening which should have been the sweetest of their lives. Alas! it had done much more, but they did not know it then.

The next morning, before Lyddy's shaken nerves had half recovered their tension, her mother entered her chamber and roused her from the uneasy sleep into which she had only just fallen. Lucifer-matches were then unknown, and the flint and matchlock were their only substitute. If these failed, there was no resource but to ride, sometimes for miles, to the nearest house

and beg some fire. Farmer Washburn was too rheumatic this morning to ride, and the hired men and the two of Lyddy's brothers, who were still unmarried and at home, had eaten a cold breakfast and were ploughing the "medder" and could not leave. The fire was out, and Lyddy must get up and ride a mile-and-a-half, as fast as she could, to get some coals.

Lyddy rose mechanically, and was dressed and on her horse, with the foot-stove fastened securely beside her, before she remembered that the nearest house, her brother "Si" Washburn's, was to be reached ten minutes sooner by passing over a section of the "'Lish Woodard" road than by the main highway. At the turning she hesitated; then, ashamed of her foolish fears, she reined her horse resolutely into the wood-road, and was soon near the scene of the dreadful adventure of the night before. She could not help hurrying a little as she approached the spot; but the bright rays of the six o'clock sun streamed through the trees and showed only the innocent underbrush below; so she rode on more quietly. Then her thoughts turned to her lover, and the caresses he had given her. It all seemed to her, in the bright morning, like a feverish dream; and a guilty blush suffused her pure face as she thought how he had embraced her, and of the sweet words that he had whispered in her ear.

Suddenly a shadow fell across the sunshine, and she was rudely roused from her tender reverie by the appearance of the woman whose demoniac laugh and ejaculation had chilled her blood the night before. She was haggard and unkempt, and had apparently been wandering all the night. As Lyddy looked at her, she could see that "Aunt Betty," from some cause or other, was almost, if not quite, frenzied, and she was about to put her horse to his speed, when the woman checked her by a motion of her hand.

"No, Lyddy Washburn," she said, in a harsh, angry voice, "you needn't run away from Tart's mother. She'll do ye no harm, though she heard all the billin' and cooin' last night, and she knows ye've stole her

darlin' away from her—her darlin'! her darlin'!" and she wrung her hands wildly.

"He's all I've got, and little ye know, ye pink-faced girl, how I love him—the straightest and handsomest man in all these parts. But, mark ye, Lyddy Washburn"—and her voice took on an unearthly depth and sternness, "them red cheeks o' yourn'll be white, an' that shiny hair thin an' gray, before ye'll take my boy away from me. I feel it—I know it!"

"You may be sure," said Lyddy Washburn, her horror showing in her strained and excited voice—"you may be sure, Betty Taylor, that as long as you live I shall never marry your son."

"Won't ye?—won't ye?" said Aunt Betty, in a kind of devilish glee. "I'll be sixty year come Michaelmas, but the Lord 'll give me strength to live past ye both. Mark my words, ye proud young puppet! Mark me! mark me!" and flinging up her withered hands, she darted up the hill-side with a savage cry, climbing the steep like a spider, till she was out of sight.

Lyddy Washburn rode on mechanically, got her fire, and was soon home again, but she could not have told a word that was said at her brother's house, nor anything of the people whom she saw after Aunt Betty left her. A dull loathing and horror possessed her, and her mother, noticing her pallid face and subdued manner, sent her—unheard-of proceeding!—peremptorily to bed right after dinner. Then Lyddy fell into a long, dreamless sleep, and though the night that followed was wakeful and uncanny, her fresh young nature soon rallied, and in a few days she had regained, to all appearance, her sprightliness and her beauty. But Lyddy Washburn was not the same. She had passed through a deep and a terrible experience, and it had left its mark upon her soul.

Captain Tart had come the next Sunday night to make his first regular "courtin'." Mrs. Washburn and good Farmer 'Liakim had been duly informed of the state of affairs, and had finally given a reluctant consent to the match, though Mrs. Washburn had wept

many tears in private, in spite of her daughter's assurances that Captain Tart would "steady down" now, and that she would never, never marry him while his mother was living. She shuddered at the thought of this more than even her mother, who had only seen Aunt Betty "dressed and in her right mind," though she had heard frightful stories of her ungovernable temper and her disgusting profanity. These, strange to say, had seemed to be a product of her age, though she had always been a termagant. Her children were temperate and intelligent men and women, though only Tertius was left now to care for her, the others having either died or removed to distant places. He seemed to be enough, however, for she was utterly bound up in him. The idea of his marriage had long tormented her. As time went on, she had come to hope that, like many of his race, he would never marry. But she began to notice his preference for Lyddy Washburn. She saw him cherishing her flowers. She knew he was to escort her from the quilting, and she felt instinctively that he would take her home by the secluded wood-road. There she had stealthily waited for them to come, had seen her son's caresses, had heard the words which she fancied were to part him from her forever, had listened till, wrought almost to madness, she had uttered the cry which had so startled them. Then she had wandered, in a sort of stupid craze, till morning around the spot where the fatal words had been spoken. There she had been met by Lyddy on her morning ride; but the solemn determination that the girl had evinced in making her vow had filled the agonized mother's heart with a fiendish delight.

"I will not die!—I will not die!" she chuckled to herself as she climbed the hill-side; and a superhuman strength seemed to descend upon her with the oath she took.

The Fourth of July came—a glorious, cloudless day. The fife and drum ushered in the morning, and they were accompanied by the peal of bells and roar of cannon. The mustering ground was early crowded with the yeo-

manry of the county and their wives and daughters, while blue coats and brass buttons blossomed thickly in all directions. Before long the music started up anew, and the procession began to form, in which the militia were to march from the church green to the parade-ground. It was growing late, but the captain had not come. All necks were craned to watch for him, when, lo! riding down the road came Captain Tart, his bright uniform becoming well his manly figure, while on the pillion behind him, in a dress of delicate green, with a silver feather—an heirloom in her family—drooping above her lovely face, rode Lyddy Washburn. She sat straight and stately in her seat, and a murmur of admiration ran through the waiting crowd.

The drum beat, and the men formed in line, but just as they were about to march, some one passed a word along, and with lifted caps they sent up three tremendous cheers for the captain and his fair sweetheart. He had, indeed, restrained his appetite for liquor of late, and the match had come to be quite generally approved among the towns-people. The appearance of the young couple in such dashing and picturesque style at the "trainin'" completed the favorable impression, and even Jotham Hunter and a score of other disappointed youths were forced to admit that the Lord had evidently made Captain Tart and Lyddy Washburn for each other. The excitement caused by the advent of the handsome young pair was easily kept up through the day, and that "trainin'" was famous in the annals of the town as the most successful that had ever been known there.

Every Sunday night thereafter Captain Tart—steady now, and becoming a most successful farmer—came to see Lyddy Washburn, and they settled down into the ordinary ways of "courtin'"; and when the Fourth of July came around again, Lyddy rode again on the pillion behind Captain Tart, and again the enthusiasm at their appearance was unbounded.

But still Lyddy would not marry him. Another year went round, and still she refused. He pressed her for her reason.

"We've ben courtin' long enough, Lyddy dear," said the honest fellow, pleadingly. "I've got a good farm, and can take care of you. Let's be cried right off, Lyddy."

But Lyddy was determined, and by-and-by she told him her reason. Then he urged her no more, while the hateful old woman on the hillside chuckled to herself, and nursed herself more carefully.

Every Fourth of July for five years Lyddy rode with Captain Tart at the mustering. Then she grew ashamed, and would go no more, and Captain Tart himself, a few years later, resigned his sword and his cocked hat to another.

The village folk talked and talked for a few years over the "long courtin' Tart Taylor was a-makin' of Lyddy Washburn." Then it began to be accepted as a settled fact, and ceased to excite remark.

Mrs. Washburn scolded and wept as Lyddy went on in her thirties, and a little gray began to creep into her hair, and her complexion lost its bloom; but though one or two farmers boldly came to try their luck at wooing away from Captain Tart the still beautiful woman, she was pathetically true to her only love, who was equally steadfast in his devotion to her.

As time crept on, her father and mother passed away, and she went to live with a brother, whose motherless children she grew to love as her own; but still Aunt Betty lived on, growing tougher and heartier apparently with each successive year. There was something ghastly in the thought that they were waiting for her to die.

Then Lyddy Washburn began to grow old and wrinkled. She was over fifty, and her lover's rugged face, with its look of pathetic patience and unfaltering resolution, lost its handsome contour, and his hale figure began to bow with time and hard work.

But still the old woman lived on, with a defiant persistence which deepened Lyddy Washburn's secret conviction that she was a witch.

It was one lovely spring day, forty years from the time when Lyddy Washburn had pledged her word to Captain Tart to marry him, that the news was borne to the village from the hill farm that Aunt Betty, at the age of one hundred years, was dead at last. She had failed to outlive them, after all. For several days before her death she had been ailing, but no one had anticipated the end so soon, and she had dropped away suddenly at the last, as though the force of gravitation had just that moment grown too strong for her hold upon the tree of life.

It was just forty years from the Fourth of July when Lyddy Washburn, in her green habit and silver feather, had first graced the pillion behind her lover at the training, that she stood up in the church beside him, an old and wrinkled woman, and became his bride. The fire and passion of their early courtship had died away, but a holy affection had taken its place, which brought, at the last, genuine happiness to their blighted lives—blighted by the curse of a selfish and vindictive woman.

The adventures of travellers in strange inns have often been remarkable, and the favorite story-teller is always furnished with accounts of one or more of them. We are willing to match the tale which follows, and which has been written expressly for ROMANCE by A. G. Canfield, with any of the kind which have appeared before it, for thrilling and absorbing interest.

THE TRAP IN THE FLOOR.

ON the 29th of December, 1845, I was travelling through the southwestern part of Virginia, and, owing to the violence of a sudden snow-storm, was belated and forced to pass the night at a little wayside tavern remote from ordinary routes of travel.

I don't mind confessing that I was then a good-looking bachelor on the sunny side of forty, nor that I was what I call a travelling merchant, but most folks denominate a pedler. Now, I am only a superannuated old man, fit for nothing but to tell tales of what happened to him in his younger days.

That was before a network of railroads covered the country, and we "commercial gents" who could afford it travelled in light, covered wagons, carrying our goods with us. I had been making a longish stay in Norfolk, laying in my stock, and, when my business there was finished, I started west, intending to visit some of the inland villages and plantations. As I said before, I had got belated and bewildered by the storm, and stumbling on this little lonely house of entertainment, determined to put up there for the night.

I can't say I was much pleased with the looks of things, for a more lonesome and desolate place I never beheld; nor were the countenances of mine host and his wife more prepossessing. I had some valuable goods in my wagon and a good horse, besides some money, so I was worth robbing and perhaps murdering. It was Hobson's choice, however, so I decided to make

the best of it; and, after a supper of fried bacon and eggs and corn bread, I asked to be shown to my room.

It was a truly wretched affair, that room, being nothing more than a shed attached to the rough, boarded cabin dignified by the title of tavern, with a single unglazed window closed by a heavy shutter. It was as cold as the dickens, and after having my packs placed in the room and seeing the door and window securely fastened, I tumbled into bed, not examining the condition of the sheets too closely, but praying there might be cover enough to keep me from freezing.

I soon fell asleep, for I was dead beat with driving so far in the cold, and over the vilest roads that ever mortal travelled. I must have slept for some time, for when I awoke all the lights in the house were out, and everything was profoundly quiet. What had awakened me I could not tell, but all of a sudden I found myself sitting up in bed, with my eyes staring wildly at the blank darkness, and my hair stirring and lifting on my head. A strange feeling possessed me that something uncanny, something dreadful, perhaps deadly, was near me, but I could neither see nor hear anything.

After waiting for some moments in that state of intense suspense which follows a sudden shock from sleep, I regained sufficient self-possession to remember that I had a box of matches in my pocket, and I reached out my hand for my clothes which I had left lying on a chair by the bedside. Something moist and warm touched it, licking it like the tongue of a dog.

I felt immensely relieved. Of course it was a dog; a dog which had been sleeping under the bed and had crawled out to make acquaintance with the new inmate. I lay down, drew the bedclothes over me, and tried to sleep again; but I could not. The strange, eerie feeling grew stronger every moment. I could not persuade myself it was really a dog in the room. A dog would have made some noise; I should have heard it scratching or moving about, but everything was deadly still.

While I lay vainly trying to reason myself into going to sleep, a soft, warm touch passed rapidly over my

face. What on earth was it? What could it be? Nothing human, I was sure. Now, I really must strike a light and see what was in the room.

With desperate determination I grabbed my clothes, got the matches and struck one. As it blazed, I cast a furtive, frightened glance around. What I expected to see I can't say, but something horrible. The match lasted so short a time, it was necessarily a brief and imperfect survey, and I struck another, and another, but could see nothing.

There was an end of tallow candle on the unpainted wooden table which did duty for a washstand. But that was at the other side of the room, and to save my life I could not summon courage to get out of bed. I am ashamed to confess it, but an absolutely paralyzing terror had mastered me. I literally could not stir. I lay still, with closed eyes, trying desperately hard to go to sleep, but try as hard as I might that touch roused me again and again.

"What was it?" I asked over and over. I could not be dreaming. I knew I was not asleep. I was broad awake, and every nerve in me was twitching and quivering with excitement. And now, as I opened my eyes and looked fearfully at the corners of the room, trying to pierce the shadows as people will do when badly scared in the dark, a strange thing happened, which I don't suppose anybody will believe, but it's as true as that I'm living.

The room, as I have said, was intensely dark, but as I looked toward the outside wall, it seemed to me it was not quite so dark there as elsewhere. A faint, luminous haze seemed to grow out of the darkness, and as I gazed at it breathlessly, it gradually took form and substance, and grew into the pale likeness of a human being, with something, but I could not see what, crouching at its feet. I rubbed my eyes hard and stared at these strange appearances until I seemed dimly to perceive that the thing crouching on the floor was the shadowy presentment of a dog. At the moment I fancied I had made this discovery, a long, low,

mournful howl sounded through the room—the most doleful and lugubrious wail I ever heard. At the same instant, a shadowy hand from the human figure seemed to point to a spot on the floor over which it hovered. Then the apparitions vanished and all was darkness.

As will sometimes happen, extremity of fear now gave me courage. With a desperate determination to fathom these mysteries, if possible, I leaped from the bed, huddled on my clothes, and, lighting the candle, I approached the spot where I had seen, or fancied I had seen, these strange appearances. After as close a scrutiny as the wretched light would allow, I found something that looked suspicious.

In the floor, close by the outer wall, a space had been sawed, large enough to admit the body of a man, and the planks fitted in again closely enough to avoid attracting notice, yet so as to be easily raised from beneath. Locks and bars were useless with such a means of ingress as this, and my late supernatural terrors were now succeeded by more reasonable bodily fears. I recalled the villainous countenance of my landlord, the still more repulsive look of his wife, thought of my valuable possessions, and decided I was fairly trapped in a murderous den where, probably, many an unfortunate traveller had perished before me. Just as I made this pleasing discovery, the remnant of candle expired and I was left in total darkness.

I am not a coward, though I don't set up for a hero, and, like many others who find themselves in a strait from which nothing but courage and presence of mind can deliver them, I suddenly developed hitherto unknown reserves of those admirable qualities. I resolved that, if I must be robbed and murdered, I would at least die hard.

Among the goods purchased in Norfolk was a hunting-knife bought on commission for a planter near Staunton. It was a splendid weapon, with richly carved handle and sheath, and a short, strong blade, sharp and true as Toledo steel. Luckily, I had not packed it in my bales, but had placed it in the valise which con-

tained my clothes. I stole like a shadow across the room, trembling lest the creaking of a plank in the crazy floor should betray me, opened the bag and seized the knife. With this in my hand, I did not feel entirely defenceless, and with renewed hope and confidence I took my stand close by the trap, determined if my room were entered, to do my best in defence of my life and property, and devoutly hoping the number of my assailants might be limited to the landlord and his wife.

I waited minute after minute, until my blood, so lately stirred by a sense of extreme peril, grew chill in my veins from the excessive cold. Suddenly I heard what seemed a stealthy step crunching the snow without. Directly after, the trap was very slowly and softly raised; a long bony hand, holding a tallow candle, protruded through the opening, and a gray, withered face appeared below, with widely staring eyes following the light of the candle around the room.

I shrank as close to the wall as I could, but I knew I could not remain long undiscovered, and as the light and the eyes approached me, I started forward and struck with all my force on the wrist that upheld the candle.

The keen blade cut through bone and muscle, and hand and candle fell with a sickening thud on the floor, while a single shrill, agonized scream told that my victim was a woman. I shivered through all my body, and, breathless with horror, waited in the darkness for an instant attack. I heard nothing, however, except a stifled moaning, which gradually died away.

I waited and waited, half-frozen with cold and fear. Nothing happened. At last, I could stand it no longer, and determined to get in bed at all hazards. Groping about in the dark, I managed to pile my heaviest bales on the trap, so that it could not be opened without noise; then, crouching on the bed, I wrapped the blankets around me to keep from freezing, and made up my mind to watch till morning.

I thought that night of horror would never end, but,

at last, gray streaks of dawn shone through the cracks in the window-shutters, and I devoutly thanked God it was over and that I had lived to see daylight again.

As soon as I could see clearly, I got up and cautiously moved my bales, shuddering in anticipation of finding the hand I had cut off last night. But what was my astonishment to find neither hand nor candle, nor even a stain of blood on the floor; nothing, actually nothing, to tell of last night's horror. Had it then really been only a dreadful dream?

Ah, the knife! I eagerly snatched it up. Yes, there was the red witness plain enough, still wet, and crimsoning the blade from point to handle. Yet on turning again to the floor there was no stain there, and on close inspection it looked solid plank from end to end.

"Well!" thought I, "of all the queer places I ever heard of, this one takes the lead. But for this knife I should be tempted to believe the events of last night only a vivid dream. This, however, is indisputable evidence of what happened, and of one thing I am very certain—the sooner I get away from here, the better for my health."

I wiped the knife on the skirt of my coat, and placed it in my bosom, taking very good care to have the handle convenient for laying hold of. I then opened the door, not without many inward misgivings, and called to the landlord to bring out my wagon.

He soon appeared, sullen and dogged as ever, but I saw no change in him since last night. He offered me breakfast, which I at once refused; not for worlds would I have eaten or drunk in that house. I was in a fever of impatience to be off, and after paying his bill in the smallest change I had, and without any unnecessary display of wealth, I stood by and watched him replace my packages in the wagon, and harness the horse. I did not offer to assist him; I was too much afraid of being taken at a disadvantage. I kept my hand on my trusty weapon, and never took my eyes off the surly villain. His amiable helpmate did not make her appearance, and I thought I could give a shrewd

guess at the reason. I made no inquiries after her health, but jumped in my wagon and drove off.

To this day I cannot account for my escape. The fellow must have seen that I suspected him, and must have guessed at the witness to his attempted crime which I carried with me, yet he made no effort to stop me. I can only suppose he was an arrant coward with all his brutality, and dared not attack me, knowing me to be armed and on my guard; especially after his accomplice was disabled.

It was nearly two years afterward that I was travelling the same road again, and passed by the scene of my memorable adventure. I had, I assure you, no intention of calling, but I found the appearance of the place so changed that I made sure it no longer belonged to my former friends, and curiosity tempted me to stop and ask what had become of them.

Everything about now wore a thrifty and cheerful look, and so did the comely dame who answered my knock. Upon inquiring after the former occupants, I heard, without surprise or regret, that they had at last received the punishment they so richly deserved. The disappearance of a traveller, who was known and expected in the neighboring town, led to suspicion, and suspicion to search.

"And would you believe, sir," continued the good woman, "they found a trap-door in that shed-room there with a false floor, and under it was a deep hole with the traveller's body in it, and the skeletons of another man and a dog, poor thing! They killed him, I suppose, for trying to defend his master. And the wicked wretches was put in jail and hung, and we bought the place dirt cheap because it had such a bad name. Some folks says it's haunted, but laws! I ain't never seed nothing, and I ain't scared of ghosts nohow."

I did not disturb her comfortable skepticism by relating my experiences in that house, but I believed then, as I believe now, that a supernatural warning saved my life on that night of terror.

There is many a slip between a lottery-ticket and a prize. The amusing story of Brigitte's is told by Michel Thivars, and was translated by Virginia Elam Thibault for the San Francisco *News-Letter*.

BRIGITTE'S TICKET.

SMALL, thin and shriveled as an apple kept through the winter, Père Landry was one of those miserly old peasants of whom it is said they would somehow manage to clip wool off an egg. Since the death of his wife he had given up "farming," and lived like a gentleman on his income, all alone in a small house at the end of the village. When I say "alone," that is a form of speech only, for he had with him his old servant Brigitte, but the poor woman counted very little—a trifle more than the dog, somewhat less than the donkey, which had cost one-hundred-and-twenty francs. She had been with Landry ever since she had first come, at twelve years of age, to tend the cows, and was now so accustomed to the ultra-parsimonious habits of her employer that they seemed to her perfectly natural. The faithful, somewhat simple-minded creature had also an unbounded admiration for the master who, without scruple, took advantage of her good-will for his own profit.

It is certain that Brigitte had not made her fortune in the miser's service; but the good woman found herself sufficiently compensated for her zeal when the old peasant would say in a friendly way: "You're a great goose, Brigitte, my girl, take my word for it." A broad grin would then spread over her homely features. "He, he, he, my master; you must always have your little joke!"

One day, whilst saving a mason's bill by repairing himself the wall which enclosed his property, Landry lost his balance and fell backward into the pond beneath, just where the water was deepest. He struggled

for several moments, calling loudly for help, but no one heard his cries. At length, his strength being exhausted, he was about to disappear for the last time, when Brigitte perceived him. The girl, regardless of her own safety, threw herself courageously into the pond, and succeeded in bringing her master to terra firma.

The old fellow was unconscious. She carried him like a child in her arms to his room, put him to bed, and with warmth and friction finally succeeded in restoring him. When he opened his eyes, the excellent creature shed tears of joy.

"Oh, my master, how glad I am you were not drowned!"

The old man was glad also. He regretted, though, having lost his trowel, which had fallen into the water at the same time as himself, but he had the delicacy not to speak of that. Indeed, in a first outburst of gratitude he said, with emotion:

"It is you who saved me. I shan't forget it, Brigitte: you hear me, girl. I'll make you a present."

"Oh, master, it isn't worth while; don't mind it."

"I shall make you a present, I tell you."

Indeed, that very evening, after a thousand hesitations, he called Brigitte, and pulling from his pocket his long leather purse, he took from it, with the grimace of one whose tooth is being extracted, a twenty-cent piece.

"There, Brigitte, that's your present! Over and above your wages, you understand, over and above!" he insisted. "Now don't go and waste it."

In comparison with the service rendered, the recompense certainly did not betray unbounded munificence; therefore, Père Landry, to augment the value of his gift, was careful to add:

"It is just the price of a lottery ticket. Buy one, and you will win a hundred thousand francs!"

It was the first time in his life that old Landry had given way to such liberality. He remembered it for many days after; took a deep interest in the fate of his

twenty-cent piece, and asked the servant innumerable times if she had bought her lottery ticket.

"Not yet, master," was her invariable reply.

At length, to put an end to his questions, which seemed repeated with mathematical regularity, she decided to satisfy the good man's curiosity.

"Yes, master, I've bought one."

"Ah! what number?"

"Number 34."

"That's good, that's good," said the old man, profoundly impressing the figure on his mind. "You won't lose it now, I hope?"

"Never fear, master."

"Because if you thought you might——"

"Well?"

"Well, you could give it to me. I'd keep it for you in my drawer."

"I shan't lose it."

The habits of Landry and his servant, which had been disturbed by this event, then resumed their usual course. Little food, still less sleep and a prodigious amount of work. Landry himself was almost consoled for his prodigality, when, one morning at the village barber's, where he went from time to time to read the Gazette, gratis, he experienced a fearful emotion!

The newspaper gave the result of the lottery-drawing, and the story was headed with these words, which shone like characters of fire before the spectacles of the dazzled good man: "Number 34 wins the first prize of 100,000 francs." Landry gave such a shout that the frightened barber, turning suddenly about, cut a bit off the ear of the school-master whom he was shaving.

"What on earth is the matter with you, Père Landry?"

"Nothing, nothing at all," replied the old fellow, who had already regained his composure.

Carefully adjusting his spectacles, he then slowly reread the announcement, syllable by syllable.

That time he was sure he had made no mistake. Number 34, the number Brigitte had bought. He let

fall the paper, and, completely overwhelmed, started off at full speed for home.

Brigitte had made ready her master's frugal breakfast of cheese and walnuts. The old man seated himself at the table, but he could not eat—he was too agitated.

"Are you sick, master?" anxiously inquired Brigitte.

"No."

"Nothing has happened to you?"

"Nothing at all, I tell you," he replied, angrily.

For several days he watched Brigitte closely. Did she know that she had won a hundred thousand francs? But no; the servant, ignorant of the scrutiny to which she was being subjected, accomplished her daily tasks as usual, with undisturbed tranquillity and good humor. Père Landry was on hot coals!

One day he risked asking her:

"There's nothing new, Brigitte, my girl?"

"Nothing at all, master, 'cept a hen that's got the pip."

Without a doubt she did not know; but old Landry could not make up his mind to tell her. It seemed to him monstrous that another should have such a marvellous windfall, the product of his twenty-cent piece, his own money!

Time was fast passing, however, and it was stated in the newspaper, of which he had bought a copy, that all prizes not claimed within three months would become the property of the company.

Father Landry no longer ate, or drank, or slept. He seemed to grow more wizened each day. Twenty times he had been on the point of alluding to the ticket, but had each time withheld his tongue. A word too much would have put the servant in possession of the truth!

One morning, after another sleepless night, he got out of bed with a cunning smile on his thin lips. He had found a solution.

He first ordered Brigitte to kill a chicken, the fattest one, and to put a roast of pork in the oven. He then brought, from behind the wood-pile in his cellar, a

bottle of fine old wine; and ended by giving the girl money to buy coffee, sugar and brandy. Brigitte began to wonder if he were going crazy.

"Some demon is playing him pranks," thought she.

But matters grew still worse when the old man, after having made her lay the cover for two, bade her take her place at the table, facing him.

"Oh, my master, I would never, never dare!"

"Sit down there as I tell you, you great stupid."

Brigitte had heard it said that mad folks must never be contradicted. She therefore obeyed without reply, seating herself on the extreme edge of her chair, very ill at ease.

"Now, eat, Brigitte; drink, my girl," ordered Landry, loading her plate and pouring out wine with a lavish hand.

Brigitte's astonishment was to be even more augmented, for, when the coffee was served, the old fellow said, without preamble:

"This is what it is, Brigitte, I'm thinking of getting married."

"Indeed, master, you are yet young enough. Though getting on, you're well-preserved," approved she.

"Since that's your opinion, and you're willing, we'll just get married, we two."

After the chicken and roast meat and old wine, Brigitte was prepared for almost any eccentricity on her master's part, but certainly not for that one!

"You are making fun of me, my master!"

"Not one bit," affirmed the old peasant.

He explained that he was growing old and had neither children nor relatives. He did not wish to die alone like a dog; and then he was grateful; did his good Brigitte believe that he had forgotten she had saved his life?

In short, Landry gave so many excellent reasons that he ended by convincing the honest girl of his sincerity. She was quite stunned by such a stroke of luck. She, a poor servant, to marry master Landry—only think of it! It was, indeed, enough to turn one's head!

The banns were published; the marriage took place. At the church the couple were greeted by hearty exclamations from the assembled villagers. After the ceremony, the new husband made haste to conduct his wife home, and, scarcely there:

"Brigitte, girl, where have you put your ticket?" asked he gayly, briskly rubbing his hands together.

"What ticket?"

"Your lottery-ticket."

"What lottery?"

"You know very well," said Landry, losing patience; "that money that I gave you——"

The bride broke into a silly laugh.

"Oh, the twenty cents," said she. "Listen, master; it isn't often one wins in those lotteries, and last winter it was so cold——"

"Well?" queried Landry, changing color.

"Well," finished she, "I didn't buy any ticket with my twenty cents; I just got me a pair of warm, wool stockings; indeed, I did!"

Nothing can exceed the literary ingenuity of the French. This is the reason, combined with their wonderful knack at expression, and their delicious sense of humor, that they lead the world in the matter of short stories. One of the most brilliant and amusing conceptions characteristic of this gifted race, is embodied in the following tale by Mary Summer. It has been translated for ROMANCE by Isabel Smithson.

THE MARRIAGE OF A GHOST.

THE stage-coach which ran between Paris and Marseilles had just reached Grenoble, when the young Baron de Saint-André climbed up to the front seat.

Here he found a good-looking fellow of his own age, and straightway the two became great friends. At the end of an hour, they began exchanging confidences, after the manner of youth.

The scion of noble stock was on his way to Paris, to buy an officer's brevet, so as to serve his country, as his ancestors had done before him; the other, who was the son of a rich tradesman, was also bound for Paris, for the purpose, however, of marrying an heiress, the daughter of an old friend of his father.

"It is an even thing!" cried the young baron laughingly. "A mere money-matter for each of us. The little god Cupid has no more concern in your business than in mine!"

"There you mistake," returned the other. "I have never seen Sylvia, but I fell in love with her, once and forever, the first time I laid eyes upon her portrait. Judge for yourself."

He opened a tortoise-shell case and Saint-André exclaimed admiringly:

"What an angel! Indeed, my dear fellow, you are very fortunate to have that charming, dainty creature picked out for you."

"I do not complain," said the bridegroom-elect, "and now I am going to sleep, if this miserable, jolting

concern will allow me. I am expected to breakfast at my future father-in-law's as soon as I reach Paris, and as I shall then be presented to my betrothed, I want to look as well as possible."

At the end of three days and two nights the heavy stage-coach lumbered into the metropolis, and the two travellers went to the nearest hotel and engaged two rooms, intending to take a little rest. Saint-André had just thrown himself upon the bed, when he heard deep groans in the next room, and on rushing in, found his late companion rolling on the floor in agonies of pain. The servants were summoned, a physician was brought in, and the latter declared that the patient was suffering from acute colic, which had probably been contracted before he left home and had been aggravated by the fatigue of the journey. He pronounced the malady a very serious one, and so it proved, for, in spite of every care, the youth expired at the end of an hour.

Saint-André was overwhelmed by the catastrophe, and when he found that he could do nothing more for his friend, he stood gazing sadly at the lifeless clay which lay on the narrow bed in the bare hotel-room. Poor fellow! So young, so gay, looking forward to a bright future, and now snatched away without warning! What would the fair bride-elect say when she heard of this tragedy?

Saint-André dreaded the bearing of the sad news to the family, but there was no one else to perform the errand, and so he set off, carrying with him the dead youth's satchel.

When he reached the stately mansion, the front door flew open, and two footmen in livery came to meet him. One relieved him of his satchel, the other took his hat and cloak, and a voice was heard exclaiming joyfully,

"Monsieur, here is your son-in-law at last!"

"Dear fellow!" cried a little, fat, white-haired man, rushing into the hall, "let me embrace you!" and he clasped the new-comer rapturously to his heart.

As soon as he could get his breath Saint-André said hurriedly,

"Pardon me, Sir, but——"

"I pardon you for being late," interrupted the other. "Look, it is twelve o'clock, and breakfast is growing cold. Come in and see my daughter. The little puss has been watching the clock for hours, and is all impatience to meet you."

He pulled the young man into the breakfast-room as he spoke, and without pausing an instant added, "My wife, Uncle Dorival, Aunt Dolarice, here is the son-in-law at last; Sylvia, my child, bid him welcome——"

"I beg pardon, Sir," cried Saint-André, but again his host interrupted him.

"Don't tell me you wish to draw back at the last moment, my dear fellow! Everything has been arranged by my esteemed friend, your father, but if you have any objection to urge, I will hear it later; bad news can always keep. Now let us sit down to breakfast at once, and be merry. Sit by me, son-in-law, and give me your opinion of this pigeon-bisque."

The visitor was young and very hungry, having fasted since midnight. The shock of his companion's sudden death had unnerved him somewhat, and so, for the time being, he yielded to the force of circumstances.

"Come what will," he said to himself, "I cannot bear to put a dampener upon the joy of these good people; at least, not until they have had their breakfast."

He joined therefore in the general merriment, smiled sweetly upon blushing Sylvia, the bride-elect, and replied unhesitatingly to his supposed future father-in-law's inquiries.

"How is your Aunt Armande, my son?" asked the old man suddenly. "I remember her as a charming young woman; when I was twenty, I came near falling in love with her! We must keep in her good graces, for she will leave a snug little fortune to her nephew."

"Dear Aunt!" exclaimed the youth in a tone of deep affection, "I hope she will enjoy life for many, many years longer," and his pious wish was rewarded with a tender glance from Sylvia's dark eyes. Aunt Dolarice also listened to him with delight.

"He has the instincts, as well as the bearing, of a born gentleman," she whispered to her brother. "Who would think that his ancestors had always sold cinnamon and nutmegs!"

Uncle Dorival, who read cyclopedias and was thought very learned, retorted quickly,

"And why should he not have as fine sentiments as a nobleman? Away with your absurd notions, sister! All men are equal!"

The clock struck two, and Saint-André suddenly felt a pang of remorse for the part he was playing, as he recollected that he had to arrange for his friend's burial and would be expected at the hotel. He therefore rose from the table, and announcing that he had important business to attend to, prepared to leave. His host protested in vain, Sylvia looked up in blank amazement, and every one entreated him to remain.

"I do not understand," began the old man, following his visitor to the front door. The young man interrupted him, saying solemnly:

"I will explain. At eleven o'clock this morning I died, after a short and sudden attack of colic, and I gave the hotel proprietor my word of honor that my body should be removed this afternoon. You see, therefore, that if I were to absent myself any longer, it would be very awkward." With these words, he disappeared, leaving the old father overwhelmed with amazement.

When the rest of the family heard what had been said, they decided that the youth was joking.

"He has humor," said Uncle Dorival. "I shall congratulate him the next time I see him. He will be here in time for supper."

But supper-time came and passed, and there was no sign of the son-in-law. The family became anxious and alarmed, and toward eight o'clock they sent a messenger to the hotel to inquire for the passenger who had arrived there, by coach, that morning. The proprietor sent back word that the gentleman named had died at eleven o'clock of colic, and that the body had

been taken away for burial in the afternoon. This news was received with unbounded astonishment, and little Sylvia burst into tears as she declared that she would wear mourning as if she were a widow.

"It was his ghost that came here," said the girl's mother in a tone of awe, but Uncle Dorival shrugged his shoulders.

"Do ghosts eat and drink as he did?" he asked. "That fellow was merely some young scapegrace, who wanted to play a trick on us, and get a good meal at the same time." Nevertheless, the ghost story went the round of the servants'-hall, and the footmen boasted of having seen a spirit in broad daylight. The tale spread, until it became a subject of wonder in boudoirs and drawing-rooms, and the fair young widow who had never been married wore a black gown and veil, and shed passionate tears for the affianced husband whom she had seen but once.

Two weeks later, she was wandering about the garden one evening, listening sadly to the songs of the nightingales. The stars were shining brilliantly, but the sight of their beauty only served to increase her sorrow.

"Alas!" she sighed, "if he were but here to stroll with me along these pathways!"

As she spoke, a cracking of boughs near her made her start with terror, and in another instant a man broke through the flowering shrubs and knelt at her feet. The stars were shining to some purpose then, for by their light she recognized the face for which she had been longing, and, in a voice which betokened mingled joy and dread, she cried,

"Then you are not dead!"

"No indeed, sweetheart," he answered softly, "I am alive, and I hope to live and love you for many a long day yet."

When the two young people entered the drawing-room, the family were playing backgammon. A look of amazement greeted the appearance of Saint-André, and every one being dumfounded, the young baron

had no difficulty in telling his story, which he concluded by asking for Sylvia's hand.

The marriage took place as soon as the proper period of mourning had elapsed, and Aunt Dolarice was triumphant.

"Did I not tell you he had the bearing of a nobleman?" she cried.

"All's well that ends well, and a baron is as good as a grocer," said Uncle Dorival.

The humor and ingenuity with which M. Edmond About has treated the following somewhat daring story will hush the criticisms of even the most sensitive sticklers for realism. It has been translated for ROMANCE by Laura E. Kendall.

WHICH ONE WAS MAD?

CHAPTER I.

ONE might pass Dr. Auvray's house twenty times without suspecting the miracles that are wrought there. It is a modest establishment near the end of Montaigne Avenue, between Prince Soltikoff's Gothic palace and the gymnasium. The unpretentious iron gates open into a small garden, filled with lilacs and rosebushes. The porter's lodge is on the left side of the gateway; the wing containing the doctor's office and the apartments of his wife and daughter are on the right; while the main building stands with its back to the street, and its south windows overlook a small grove of horse-chestnuts and lindens.

It is there that the doctor treats, and generally cures, cases of mental aberration. I would not introduce you into his house, however, if you incurred any risk of meeting frenzied lunatics or hopeless imbeciles. You will be spared all such harrowing sights. Dr. Auvray is a specialist, and treats cases of monomania only. He is an extremely kind-hearted man, endowed with plenty of shrewdness and good sense; a true philosopher, an untiring student, and an enthusiastic follower of the famous Esquirol.

Having come into possession of a small fortune soon after the completion of his medical course, he married, and founded the establishment which we have described. Had there been a spark of charlatanism in his composition, he could easily have amassed a fortune, but he had been content to merely earn a living. He shunned notoriety, and when he effected a wonderful cure, he

never proclaimed it upon the house-tops. His very enviable reputation had been acquired without any effort on his part, and almost against his will. Would you have a proof of this? Well, his treatise on Monomania, published by Baillière in 1852, has passed through six editions, though the author has never sent a single copy to the newspapers. Modesty is a good thing, certainly, but one may carry it too far. Mademoiselle Auvray will have a dowry of only twenty thousand francs, and she will be twenty-two in April.

About a month ago, a hired coupé stopped in front of Dr. Auvray's door, from which two men alighted and entered the office. The servant asked them to be seated, and await his master's return.

One of the visitors was about fifty years of age, a tall, stout, dark-complexioned but ruddy-faced man, rather ungainly in figure and appearance. He had thick, stubby hands and enormous thumbs. Picture a laboring man, dressed in his employer's clothes, and you have M. Morlot.

His nephew, Francis Thomas, is a young man, about twenty-three years old; but it is very difficult to describe him, as there is nothing distinctive either in his manner or appearance. He is neither tall nor short, handsome nor ugly, stout nor thin: in short, he is commonplace and mediocre in every respect, with chestnut hair, and of an extremely retiring disposition, manner and attire. When he entered Dr. Auvray's office, he seemed to be greatly excited. He walked wildly to and fro, as if unable to remain in one place; looked at twenty different things in the same instant, and would certainly have handled them all if his hands had not been tied.

"Compose yourself, my dear Francis," said his uncle soothingly. "What I am doing is for your own good. You will be perfectly comfortable and happy here, and the doctor is sure to cure you."

"I am not sick. There is nothing whatever the matter with me. Why have you tied my hands?"

"Because you would have thrown me out of the window, if I had not. You are not in your right mind,

my poor boy, but Dr. Auvray will soon make you well again."

"I'm as sane as you are, uncle; and I can't imagine what you mean. My mind is perfectly clear and my memory excellent. Shall I recite some poetry to you, or construe some Latin? I see there is a Tacitus here in the book-case. Or if you prefer, I will solve a problem in Algebra or Geometry. You don't desire it? Very well, then, listen while I tell you what we have been doing this morning.

"You came to my room at eight o'clock, not to wake me, for I was not asleep, but to get me out of bed. I dressed myself without any assistance from Germain. You asked me to accompany you to Dr. Auvray's; I refused; you insisted; then Germain aided you in tying my hands. I shall dismiss him this evening. I owe him thirteen days' wages; that is to say, thirteen francs, as I promised to pay him thirty francs a month. You, too, owe him something, as you are the cause of his losing his New Year's gift. Isn't this a tolerably clear statement of the facts? Do you still intend to try to make me out a lunatic? Ah, my dear uncle, let your better nature assert itself. Remember that my mother was your sister. What would my poor mother say if she saw me here? I bear you no ill-will, and everything can be amicably arranged. You have a daughter."

"Ah, there it is again. You must certainly see that you are not in your right mind. I have a daughter—I? Why, I am a bachelor, as you know perfectly well."

"You have a daughter——" repeated Francis, mechanically.

"My poor nephew, listen to me a moment. Have you a cousin?"

"A cousin? No, I have no cousin. Oh, you won't catch me there. I have no cousin, either male or female."

"But I am your uncle, am I not?"

"Yes, you are my uncle, of course, though you seem to have forgotten the fact this morning."

"Then if I had a daughter, she would be your cousin; but as you have no cousin, I can have no daughter."

"You are right, of course. I had the pleasure of meeting her at Ems last summer with her mother; I love her; I have reason to believe that she is not indifferent to me, and I have the honor to ask you for her hand in marriage."

"Whose hand, may I ask?"

"Your daughter's hand."

"Just hear him," Morlot said to himself. "Dr. Auvray must certainly be very clever if he succeeds in curing him. I am willing to pay him six thousand francs a year for board and treatment. Six thousand francs from thirty thousand, leaves twenty-four thousand. How rich I shall be! Poor Francis!"

He seated himself again, and picked up a book that chanced to be lying on a table near him.

"Calm yourself," he said soothingly, "and I will read you something. Try to listen, it may quiet you."

Opening the volume, he read as follows:

"'Monomania is opinionativeness on one subject; a persistent clinging to one idea; the supreme ascendency of a single passion. It has its origin in the heart. To cure the malady, the cause must be ascertained and removed. It arises generally from love, fear, vanity, overweening ambition or remorse, and betrays itself by the same symptoms as any other passion: sometimes by boisterousness, gayety and garrulousness; sometimes by extreme timidity, melancholy, and silence.'"

As M. Marlot read on, Francis became more quiet, and at last appeared to fall into a peaceful slumber.

"Bravo!" thought the uncle, "here is a triumph of medical skill already. It has put to sleep a man who was neither hungry nor sleepy!"

Francis was not asleep, but he was feigning sleep to perfection. His head drooped lower and lower, and he regulated his heavy breathing with mathematical exactness. Uncle Morlot was completely deceived. He went on reading for some time in more and more subdued tones; then he yawned; then he stopped read-

ing; then he let the book drop from his hands and closed his eyes, and in another minute he was sound asleep, to the intense delight of his nephew, who was watching him maliciously out of the corner of his eye.

Francis began operations by scraping his chair on the uncarpeted floor, but M. Morlot moved no more than a post. Francis then tramped noisily up and down the room, but his uncle only snored the louder. Then the nephew approached the doctor's desk, picked up an eraser that was lying there, and with it finally succeeded in cutting the rope that bound his hands. On regaining his liberty, he uttered a smothered exclamation of joy; then he cautiously approached his uncle. In two minutes, M. Morlot himself was securely bound, but it had been done so gently and so adroitly that his slumbers had not been disturbed in the least.

Francis stood admiring his work for a moment; then he stooped and picked up the book that had fallen on the floor. It was Dr. Auvray's treatise on Monomania. He carried it off into a corner of the room and began to read it with much apparent interest, while awaiting the doctor's coming.

CHAPTER II.

It is necessary to revert briefly to the antecedents of this uncle and nephew. Francis Thomas was the only son of a former toy-merchant, on the Rue du Saumon. The toy trade is an excellent business, about one hundred per cent profit being realized on most of the articles: consequently, since his father's death Francis had been enjoying that ease generally known as honest ease, possibly because it enables one to live without stooping to sordid acts, possibly, too, because it enables one to keep one's friends honest, also. In short, he had an income of thirty thousand francs a year.

His tastes were extremely simple, as I have said before. He detested show, and always selected gloves, waistcoats and trousers of those sober hues shading from dark brown to black. He never carried an eye-

glass for the very good reason, he said, that he had excellent eye sight; he wore no scarf-pin because he needed no pin to hold his cravat securely: but the fact is, he was afraid of exciting comment. He would have been wretched had his sponsors bestowed upon him any save the most commonplace names; but fortunately his cognomens were as modest and unpretending as if he had chosen them himself.

His excessive modesty prevented him from adopting a profession. When he left college, he considered long and carefully the seven or eight different paths open before him. A legal career seemed to be attended with too much publicity; the medical profession was too exciting; business, too complicated. The responsibilities of an instructor of youth were too onerous: the duties of a government official, too confining and servile. As for the army, that was out of the question, not because he feared the enemy, but because he shuddered at the thought of wearing a uniform; so he finally decided to live on his income, not because it was the easiest thing to do, but because it was the most unobtrusive.

But it was in the presence of the fair sex that his weakness became most apparent. He was always in love with somebody. Whenever he attended a play or a concert, he immediately began to gaze around him in search of a pretty face. If he found one to his taste, the play was admirable, the music perfection: if he failed, the whole performance was detestable, the actors murdered their lines, and all the singers sang out of tune. He worshipped these divinities in secret, however, for he had never dared to speak to one of them.

When he fancied himself a victim to the tender passion, he spent the greater part of his time in composing the most impassioned declarations of love, which never passed his lips, however. In imagination he addressed the tenderest words of affection to his adored one, and revealed the innermost depths of his soul to her; he held long conversations with her, delightful interviews, in which he furnished both the questions and answers.

His burning protestations of undying love would have melted a heart of ice, but none of his divinities were ever aware of his aspirations and longings.

It chanced, however, in the month of August of that same year, about four months before he so adroitly bound his uncle's hands, that Francis had met at Ems a young lady almost as shy and retiring as himself, a young lady whose excessive timidity seemed to imbue him with some of the courage of an ordinary mortal. She was a frail, delicate *Parisienne*—pale as a flower that had blossomed in the shade, and with a skin as transparent as an infant's. She was at Ems in company with her mother, who had been advised to try the waters for an obstinate throat trouble, chronic laryngitis, if I remember right. The mother and daughter had evidently led a very secluded life, for they watched the noisy crowd with undisguised curiosity and amazement. Francis was introduced to them quite unexpectedly by one of his friends who was returning from Italy by way of Germany. After that, Francis was with them almost constantly for a month; in fact, he was their sole companion.

For sensitive, retiring souls, a crowd is the most complete of solitudes; the more people there are around them, the more persistently they retreat to a corner to commune with themselves. Of course, the mother and daughter soon became well acquainted with Francis, and they grew very fond of him. Like the navigator who first set foot on American soil, they discovered some new treasure every day. They never inquired whether he was rich or poor; it was enough for them to know that he was good. Francis, for his part, was inexpressibly delighted with his own transformation. Have you ever heard how spring comes in the gardens of Russia? One day everything is shrouded in snow: the next day, a ray of sunshine appears and puts grim winter to flight. By noon, the trees are in bloom; by night they are covered with leaves; a day or two more, and the fruit appears.

The heart of Francis underwent a similar metamor-

phosis. His reserve and apparent coldness disappeared as if by magic, and in a few short weeks the timid youth was transformed into a resolute, energetic man—at least to all appearances. I do not know which of the three persons first mentioned marriage, but that is a matter of no consequence. Marriage is always understood when two honest hearts avow their love.

Now Francis was of age and undisputed master of himself and his possessions, but the girl he loved had a father whose consent must be obtained, and it was just here that this young man's natural timidity of disposition reasserted itself. True, Claire had said to him; "You can write to my father without any misgivings. He knows all about our attachment. You will receive his consent by return mail."

Francis wrote and rewrote his letter a hundred times, but he could not summon up the courage to send it.

Surely the ordeal was an easy one, and it would seem as though the most timorous mind could have passed through it triumphantly. Francis knew the name, position, fortune, and even the disposition of his prospective father-in-law. He had been initiated into all the family secrets, he was virtually a member of the household. The only thing he had to do was to state in the briefest manner who he was and what he possessed. There was no doubt whatever as to the response; but he delayed so long that at the end of a month Claire and her mother very naturally began to doubt his sincerity. I think they would have waited patiently another fortnight, however, but the father would not permit it. If Claire loved the young man, and her lover was not disposed to make known his intentions, the girl must leave him at once. Perhaps Mr. Francis Thomas would then come and ask her hand in marriage. He knew where to find her.

Thus it chanced that, one morning when Francis went to invite the ladies to walk as usual, the proprietor of the hotel informed him that they had returned to Paris, and that their apartments were already occupied by an English family. This crushing blow, fall-

ing so unexpectedly, destroyed the poor fellow's reason, and rushing out of the house like a madman, he began a frantic search for Claire in all the places where he had been in the habit of meeting her. At last, he returned to his own hotel with a violent sick headache, which he proceeded to doctor in the most energetic manner. First, he had himself bled, then he took baths in boiling hot water, and applied the most ferocious mustard-plasters: in short, he avenged his mental tortures upon his innocent body. When he believed himself cured, he started for France, firmly resolved to have an interview with Claire's father before even changing his clothes. He travelled with all possible speed, jumped off the train before it stopped, forgetting his baggage entirely, sprang into a cab and shouted to the coachman:

"Drive to her house as quick as you can!"

"Where, sir?"

"To the house of Monsieur—on the—the Rue—I can't remember." He had forgotten the name and address of the girl he loved.

"I will go home," he said to himself, "and it will come back to me."

So he handed his card to the coachman, who took him to his own home.

His concierge was an aged man, with no children, and named Emmanuel. On seeing him, Francis bowed profoundly, and said:

"Sir, you have a daughter, Mademoiselle Claire Emmanuel. I intended to write and ask you for her hand in marriage, but decided it would be more seemly to make the request in person."

They saw that he was mad, and his Uncle Morlot, in the Faubourg Saint Antoin, was immediately summoned.

Now Uncle Morlot was the most scrupulously honest man on the Rue Charonne, which, by the way, is one of the longest streets in Paris. He manufactured antique furniture with conscientious care, but only medi-

ocre skill. He was not a man to pass off ebonized pine for real ebony, or a cabinet of his own make for a mediæval production; and yet, he understood the art of making new wood look old and full of apparent worm-holes as well as any body living; but it was a principle of his never to cheat or deceive any one. With almost absurd moderation for a follower of this trade, he limited his profits to five per cent over and above the expenses of the business, so he had gained more esteem than money. When he made out a bill, he invariably added up the items three times, so afraid was he of making a mistake in his own favor.

After thirty years of close attention to business he was very little better off than when he finished his apprenticeship. He had merely earned his living, just like the humblest of his workmen, and he often asked himself rather enviously how his brother-in-law had managed to acquire a competence. If this brother-in-law, with the natural arrogance of a *parvenu*, rather looked down on the poor cabinet-maker, the latter, with all the pride of a man who has not tried to succeed financially, esteemed himself all the more highly. He gloried in his poverty, as it were; and said to himself with plebeian pride: "I, at least, have the satisfaction of knowing that I owe nothing to anyone."

Man is a strange animal: I am not the first person who has made that remark. This most estimable Monsieur Morlot, whose over-scrupulous probity made him almost a laughing stock, experienced a singular feeling of elation in his secret heart when he was apprised of his nephew's condition. An insinuating voice whispered softly: "If Francis is insane, you will become his guardian."

"You will be none the richer," responded Conscience, promptly.

"And why not?" persisted the Tempter. "The expenses of an insane person never amount to thirty thousand francs a year. Besides, you will be put to a great deal of trouble and have to neglect your business,

very probably, so it is only right that you should receive some compensation. You will not be wronging any one by taking part of the money."

"But one ought to expect no compensation for such services to a member of one's family," retorted the voice of Conscience.

"Then why have the members of our family never done anything for me? I have been in straightened circumstances again and again, and have found it almost impossible to meet my obligations, but neither my nephew Francis nor his deceased father ever rendered me the slightest assistance."

"Nonsense," replied his better nature; "this attack of insanity is nothing serious. Francis will be himself again in a few days."

"It is just as probable that the malady will wear him out, and that you will come into possession of the entire property," persisted the wily Tempter.

The worthy cabinet-maker tried to close his ears to the insidious voice, but his ears were so large that the subtle, persistent voice glided in, despite all his efforts. The establishment on the Rue Charonne was intrusted to the care of the foreman, and the uncle took up his abode in his nephew's comfortable apartments. He slept in an excellent bed, and enjoyed it very much: he sat down to a well-spread table, and the indigestion, which had tormented him for years, vanished as if by enchantment. He was waited upon and shaved by Germain, his nephew's valet, and he speedily came to regard such attentions as a necessity. Gradually, too, he became accustomed to seeing his nephew in this deplorable condition, and to quite reconcile himself to the idea that he would never be cured; but all the while, he kept repeating to himself, as if to ease his conscience, "I am wronging nobody."

At the expiration of three months he had become very tired of having an insane person shut up in the house with him—for he had long since begun to consider himself at home—and his nephew's incessant maundering, and continual requests for Mlle. Claire's

hand in marriage, became an intolerable bore. He therfore resolved to get rid of him by placing him in Dr. Auvray's insane asylum.

"After all, my nephew will be much better cared for there," he said to himself, "and I shall be much easier in mind. Every one admits that the best way to divert a lunatic's mind is to give him a change of scene, so I am only doing my duty."

It was with this very thought in his mind that he fell asleep just before Francis bound his hands. What an awakening was his!

CHAPTER III.

The doctor entered with a smiling excuse for his long delay. Francis rose, laid his book on the table, and proceeded with volubility to explain the business that had brought him there.

"It is my uncle on my mother's side that I desire to intrust to your care," he began. "He is, as you see, a man between forty-five and fifty years of age, accustomed to manual labor and the economy and privations of a humble and busy life; moreover, he was born of healthy, hard-working parents, in a family where no case of mental aberration was ever before known. You will not therefore be obliged to contend with an hereditary malady. His is probably one of the most peculiar cases of monomania that has ever come under your observation. His mood changes almost instantaneously from one of extreme gayety to profound melancholy. In fact, it is a strange compound of monomania and melancholy."

"He has not lost his reason entirely?"

"Oh, no, he is never violent: in fact, he is insane upon one subject only."

"What is the nature of his malady?"

"Alas! the besetting sin of the age, sir; cupidity. He has become deeply imbued with the spirit of our times. After working hard from childhood, he finds himself still comparatively poor, while my father, who began life under like circumstances, was able to leave

me a snug little fortune. My uncle began by being envious of me; then the thought occurred to him that, being my only relative, he would become my heir in case of my death, and my guardian in case I became insane; and as it is very easy for a weak-minded person to believe whatever he desires to believe, the unfortunate man soon persuaded himself that I had lost my reason. He has told everybody that this is the case; and he will soon tell you so. In the carriage, though his hands were tied, he really believed that it was he who was bringing me here."

"When did this malady first show itself?"

"About three months ago. He came to my concierge and said to him, in the wildest manner: 'Monsieur Emmanuel, you have a daughter. Let me in, and then come and assist me in binding my nephew.'

"Is he aware of his condition? Does he know that his mind is affected?"

"No, sir, and I think that is a favorable sign. I should add, however, that his physical health is somewhat impaired, and he is much troubled with indigestion and insomnia."

"So much the better; an insane person who sleeps and eats regularly is generally incurable. Suppose you allow me to wake him."

Dr. Auvray placed his hand gently on the shoulder of the sleeper, who instantly sprang to his feet. The first movement he made was to rub his eyes. When he discovered that his hands were tied, he instantly suspected what had taken place while he was asleep, and burst into a hearty laugh.

"A good joke, a very good joke!" he exclaimed.

Francis drew the doctor a little aside.

"Sir, in five minutes, he will be in a towering rage," he whispered.

"Let me manage him. I know how to take him."

The good doctor smiled on the supposed patient as one smiles on a child one wishes to amuse. "Well, you wake in very good spirits, my friend; did you have a pleasant dream?" he asked affably.

"No, I had no dreams at all; I'm merely laughing to find myself tied up like a bundle of fagots. One would suppose that I was the madman, instead of my nephew."

"There, I told you so," whispered Francis.

"Have the goodness to untie my hands, doctor. I can explain better when I am free."

"I will unbind you, my friend, but you must promise to give no trouble."

"Can it be, doctor, that you really take me for an insane person?"

"No, my friend, but you are ill, and we will take care of you, and, I hope, cure you. See, your hands are free, don't abuse your liberty."

"What the devil do you imagine I'll do? I came here merely to bring my nephew."

"Very well, we will talk about that matter by-and-by. I found you sound asleep. Do you often fall asleep in the day-time?"

"Never! It was that stupid book that——"

"Oh, ho! this is a serious case," muttered the author of the book referred to. "So you really believe that your nephew is insane?"

"Dangerously so, doctor. The fact that I was obliged to bind his hands with this very rope is proof of that."

"But it was your hands that were bound. Don't you recollect that I just untied them?"

"But let me explain——"

"Gently, gently, my friend, you are becoming excited. Your face is very red; I don't want you to fatigue yourself. Just be content to answer my questions. You say that your nephew is ill?"

"Mad, mad, mad, I tell you!"

"And it pleases you to see him mad?"

"What?"

"Answer me frankly. You don't wish him to be cured, do you?"

"Why do you ask me that?"

"Because his fortune is under your control. Don't you wish to be rich? Are you not disappointed and

discouraged because you have toiled so long without making a fortune? Don't *you* very naturally think that your turn has come now?"

M. Morlot made no reply. His eyes were riveted on the floor. He asked himself if he was not dreaming, and tried his best to decide how much of this whole affair was real, and how much imaginary, so completely bewildered was he by the questions of this stranger, who read his heart as if it had been an open book.

"Do you ever hear voices?" inquired Dr. Auvray.

Poor M. Morlot felt his hair stand on end, and remembering that relentless voice that was ever whispering in his ear, he replied mechanically: "Sometimes."

"Ah, he is the victim of an hallucination," murmured the doctor.

"No, there is nothing whatever the matter with me, I tell you. Let me get out of here. I shall be as crazy as my nephew if I remain much longer. Ask my friends. They will all tell you that I am perfectly sane. Feel my pulse. You can see that I have no fever."

"Poor uncle!" murmured Francis. "He doesn't know that insanity is delirium unattended with fever."

"Yes," added the doctor, "if we could only give our patients a fever, we could cure every one of them."

M. Morlot sank back despairingly in his arm-chair. His nephew began to pace the floor.

"I am deeply grieved at my uncle's deplorable condition," he remarked, feelingly; "but it is a great consolation to me to be able to intrust him to the care of a man like yourself. I have read your admirable treatise on Monomania. It is the most valuable work of the kind that has appeared since the publication of the great Esquirol's Treatise upon Mental Diseases. I know, moreover, that you are truly a father to your patients, so I will not insult you by commending M. Morlot to your special care. As for the compensation you are to receive, I leave that entirely to you."

As he spoke, he drew from his pocket-book a thousand-franc note and laid it on the mantel. "I shall do

myself the honor to call again sometime during the ensuing week. At what hour are your patients allowed to see visitors?"

"From twelve to two, only; but I am always at home. Good day, sir."

"Stop him! stop him!" shouted Uncle Morlot. "Don't let him go. He is the one that is mad; I will tell you all about it."

"Calm yourself, my dear uncle," said Francis, starting towards the door. "I leave you in Dr. Auvray's care; he will soon cure you, I trust."

M. Morlot sprang up to intercept his nephew, but the doctor detained him.

"What a strange fatality!" cried the poor uncle. "He has not uttered a single senseless remark. If he would only rave as usual, you would soon see that I am not the one who is mad, but——"

Francis already had his hand on the door-knob, but, turning suddenly, he retraced his steps as if he had forgotten something and walking straight up to the doctor said:

"My uncle's malady was not the only thing that brought me here."

"Ah," murmured M. Morlot, seeing a ray of hope, at last.

"You have a daughter," continued the young man.

"At last!" shouted the poor uncle. "You are a witness to the fact that he said: 'You have a daughter.'"

"Yes," replied the doctor, addressing Francis. "Will you kindly explain——"

"You have a daughter, Mlle. Claire Auvray."

"There, there! didn't I tell you so?" cried the uncle.

"Yes," again replied the doctor.

"She was at Ems three months ago with her mother."

"Bravo! bravo!" yelled M. Marlot.

"Yes," responded the physician for the third time.

M. Morlot rushed up to the doctor, and cried: "You are not the doctor, but a patient in the house."

"My friend, if you are not more quiet we shall have to give you a *douche*."

M. Morlot recoiled in terror. His nephew continued calmly:

"I love your daughter, sir; I have some hope that I am loved in return, and if her feelings have not changed since the month of September, I have the honor to ask her hand in marriage."

"Is it to Monsieur Francis Thomas that I have the honor of speaking?" inquired the doctor.

"The same, sir. I should have begun by telling you my name."

"Then you must permit me to say, sir, that you have been guilty of no unseemly haste——"

But just then the good doctor's attention was diverted by M. Morlot, who was rubbing his hands in a frenzied manner.

"What is the matter with you, my friend?" the doctor asked in his kind, fatherly way.

"Nothing, nothing! I am only washing my hands."

"And why?"

"There is something on them that troubles me."

"Show me what it is. I don't see anything."

"Can't you see it? There, there, between my fingers. I see it plainly enough."

"What do you see?"

"My nephew's money. Take it away, doctor. I'm an honest man; I don't want anything that belongs to anybody else."

While the physician was listening attentively to M. Morlot's first ravings, an extraordinary change took place in Francis. He became as pale as death, and seemed to be suffering terribly from cold, for his teeth chattered so violently that Dr. Auvray turned and asked what was the matter with him.

"Nothing," he replied. "She is coming, I hear her! It is joy, but it overpowers me. It seems to be falling on me and burying me beneath its weight like a snow-drift. Winter will be a dreary time for lovers. Oh, doctor, see what is the matter with my head!"

But his uncle rushed up to him, crying:

"Enough, enough! Don't rave so! I don't want

people to think you mad. They will say I stole your reason from you. I'm an honest man. Doctor, look at my hands; examine my pockets, send to my house on the Rue Charonne. Search the cupboard. Open all the drawers. You will find I have nothing that belongs to any other person."

Between his two patients the doctor was at his wits' end, when a door opened, and Claire came in to tell her father that breakfast was on the table.

Francis leaped up out of his chair, as if moved by a spring, but though his will prompted him to rush toward Mlle. Auvray, his flesh proved weak, and he fell back in his chair like lead. He could scarcely murmur the words:

"Claire, it is I! I love you. Will you——"

He passed his hand over his forehead. His pale face became a vivid scarlet. His temples throbbed almost to bursting; it seemed to him that an iron band was contracting more and more around his head, just above his brows. Claire, frightened nearly to death, seized both his hands; his skin was so dry and his pulse so rapid that the poor girl was terrified. It was not thus that she had hoped to see him again. In a few minutes, a yellowish tinge appeared about his nostrils; nausea ensued, and Dr. Auvray recognized all the symptoms of a bilious fever.

"How unfortunate!" he said to himself. "If this fever had only attacked his uncle, it would have cured him!"

He rang. A servant appeared, and shortly afterward Mme. Auvray, who scarcely knew Francis, so greatly had he changed. It was necessary that the sick man should be got to bed without delay, and Claire relinquished her own pretty room to him. While they were installing him there, his uncle wandered excitedly about the parlor, tormenting the doctor with questions, embracing the sick man, seizing Mme. Auvray's hand, and exclaiming wildly: "Save him, save him! He shall not die! I will not have him die! I forbid it. I have a right to. I am his uncle and guardian. If you

do not cure him, people will say I killed him. You are witnesses to the fact that I ask for none of his property! I shall give all his possessions to the poor! Some water—please give me some water to wash my hands!" He was taken to the building occupied by the patients, where he became so violent that it was necessary to put him in a straight-jacket.

Mme. Auvray and her daughter nursed Francis with the tenderest care. You may say that these ladies saw a prospective son-in-law and husband in their patient, but I am confident he would have fared equally well even if he had been a stranger. Saint Vincent de Paul only devised a uniform; for every woman, whatever may be her station in life, is a sister of charity at heart. Confined in the sick-room day and night, the mother and daughter spent most of their leisure time in discussing the situation. They could not explain the lover's long silence or his sudden reappearance. If he loved Claire, why had he left her in suspense for three dreary months? Why did he feel obliged to give his uncle's malady as an excuse for presenting himself at Dr. Auvray's house? But if he had recovered from his infatuation, why did he not take his uncle to some other physician? There were plenty of them in Paris. Possibly he had believed himself cured of his folly until the sight of Claire undeceived him? But no, he had asked her father for her hand in marriage before he saw her again. But, in his delirium, Francis answered all or nearly of these questions. Claire, bending tenderly over him, listened breathlessly to his every word, and afterward repeated them to her mother and to the doctor, who was not long in discovering the truth. They soon knew that he had lost his reason and under what circumstances: they even learned how he had been the innocent cause of his uncle's insanity. Fears of an entirely different nature now began to assail Mlle. Auvray. Was the terrible crisis which she had unwittingly brought about likely to cure his mental disorder? The doctor assured his daughter that a fever, under such circumstances, was almost certain to put an end to the insanity, but there

is no rule without its exception, especially in medicine. And even if he seemed to be cured, was there not danger of a recurrence of the malady?

"So far as I am concerned, I am not in the least afraid," said Claire, smiling sadly. "I am the cause of all his troubles. Therefore it is my duty to console him. After all, his madness consists merely in continually asking for my hand. There will be no need of doing that after I become his wife, so we really have nothing to fear. The poor fellow lost his reason through his excessive love; so cure him, my dear father, but not entirely. Let him remain insane enough to love me as much as I love him!"

"We will see," replied Dr. Auvray. "Wait until this fever passes off. If he seems ashamed of having been demented, if he appears gloomy or melancholy after his recovery, I cannot vouch for him; if, on the contrary, he remembers his temporary aberration of mind without mortification or regret—if he speaks of it without any reserve, and if he is not averse to seeing the persons who nursed him through his illness, there is not the slightest reason to apprehend a return of the malady."

After a week of delirium, a profuse perspiration broke up the fever, and the patient was soon out of danger. When he found himself in a strange room with Mme. and Mlle. Auvray, his first impression was that he was still a guest at The Four Seasons Hotel in Ems. His weakness and emaciation, together with the doctor's frequent visits, speedily convinced him that he was mistaken, however; and after that he began to have a vague recollection of the events that had occurred. The doctor now came to his aid, and gave him, bit by bit, a tolerably clear idea of the facts of the case, very much as one doles out food to a person enfeebled by long fasting. At first, Francis listened to his own history as he would have listened to a romance in which he played no part whatever. He was quite another man now. He had risen up from that fever as one rises up out of the grave, but the empty

store-houses in his brain were gradually filled again without any undue effort on his part. In a comparatively short time he regained entire control of his faculties, and, almost simultaneously, the thick haze that had enshrouded the past rolled away forever. His complete restoration was a work of skill, and above all, of patience; but patience and gentleness are the chief characteristics of Dr. Auvray's treatment.

On the 25th of December, Francis, fortified by a cup of chicken-broth, and half the yolk of a soft boiled egg, sat up in bed and without the slightest hesitancy or mortification, and in a perfectly lucid manner, gave the history of the past three months without any emotion save that of quiet joy. Claire and Mme. Auvray wept as they listened to him: the doctor pretended to be taking notes, or rather to be writing under dictation, but something besides ink fell on the paper. When the story ended, the convalescent added, by way of conclusion:

"And now on this, the 25th day of December, I say to my good doctor, and much loved father, Dr. Auvray —whose street and number I shall never again forget— 'Sir, you have a daughter, Mlle. Claire Auvray, whom I met at Ems, with her mother. I love her; she has proved that she loves me in return, and if you have no fears that I will become insane again, I have the honor to ask her hand in marriage.' "

The doctor was so deeply affected that he could only bow his head in token of assent, but Claire put her arms around the sick man's neck and kissed him tenderly on the forehead. I am sure I should desire no better response under like circumstances.

That same day, M. Morlot, who had become much more quiet and tractable, and who had long since been released from the bondage of a straight-jacket, rose about eight o'clock in the morning, as usual. On getting out of bed, he picked up his slippers, examined and re-examined them inside and out, then handed them to a nurse for inspection, begging him to see for himself that they contained no thirty thousand francs.

Until positively assured of this fact he would not consent to put them on. Then he carefully shook each of his garments out of the window, but not until after he had searched every fold and pocket in them. After his toilet was completed, he called for a pencil, and wrote on the walls of his chamber:

"*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's money, nor anything that is his.*"

Then he began to rub his hands frantically, to convince himself that his nephew's money was not clinging to them. When Dr. Auvray paid his daily visit, the poor man fancied himself in the presence of a magistrate, and insisted upon being searched immediately. When the doctor told him that Francis would soon be entirely well again, the uncle asked if the money had been found.

"As my nephew will soon leave this place, he will want his money. Where is it? I haven't got it, unless it is in my bed."

And he turned and tore his bed to pieces before any one had time to prevent it. When his breakfast was brought in, he subjected his plate, glass, knife and fork and napkin to a rigid scrutiny, declaring all the while that nothing could induce him to devour his nephew's money. After he finished his repast, he washed his hands in several waters.

"The fork is made of silver. What if some of it should have stuck to my hands?" he exclaimed, anxiously.

Dr. Auvray is confident of his ability to cure him, but it will take time. It is in the summer and autumn that physicians are most successful in their endeavors to cure insanity.

The following touching story of the Franco-Prussian war is from the powerful pen of Alphonse Daudet, and was translated for the Boston *Transcript*. It describes such a campaign as every Frenchman wanted, and such as he believes in his soul might have been carried on if only—— But, as Dr. Holmes has quaintly phrased it, the "As," and not the "If," wins in this world.

THE SIEGE OF BERLIN.

We were walking up the Avenue des Champs-Elysées with Doctor V., and reading the story of the siege of Paris in the walls and pavements around us, perforated by shells and broken by canister shot. Shortly before we arrived at the Square de l'Etoile the doctor stopped, and pointing to one of the large corner houses which are so pompously grouped around the Arc de Triomphe, said——

"Do you see those four windows which open on that balcony up there? During the early part of August, that terrible month of 1870 which was so full of storms and disasters, I was called to that house to attend a case of apoplexy. It was the house of Colonel Jouve, a cuirassier of the first empire, and a man full of glory and patriotism. He had lived since the beginning of the war in the Champs-Elysées in the apartments up there. Can you guess why? In order to assist at the triumphal return of our troops. Poor old man! The news of Wissembourg came as he was getting up from the table. Reading Napoleon's name at the bottom of the bulletin of defeat, he had fallen as if struck by a thunder-bolt.

"I found the old cuirassier stretched out upon the floor of the room, his face as rigid and as expressionless as if he had received a blow on the head from a club. Standing, he must have been very tall; lying down he appeared immense. His handsome features, perfect teeth and a head of thick, white hair, made his eighty years seem to be but sixty. Near him knelt his grand-

daughter, in tears. She resembled him very much. To see them together you would have said that they were like two Greek medallions struck from the same mould, only the one was old and time-worn and a little irregular in outline, while the other was bright and perfect, like the complete brilliancy and softness of a new coin.

"The child's grief touched me. She was the daughter and granddaughter of a soldier. Her father was on the staff of MacMahon, and the figure of her old grandfather stretched before her called up in her mind another image not less terrible. I reassured her as well as I could, but to tell the truth I had little hope. It was a case of hemiplegia, or paralysis of one side of the body, and at eighty, one hardly ever recovers from that. For three days he remained in the same motionless and stupefied condition. In the meantime the news of Reichshoffen had arrived in Paris. You will recall in what a strange way the news came. Until evening we believed that the French had gained a great victory, twenty thousand Prussians killed and the prince royal a prisoner. I do not know by what miracle, by what magnetic current, an echo of our national joy found its way into the paralyzed mind of the semi-conscious soldier; nevertheless, it is true that when I approached his bed that evening I did not find the same man. His eyes were almost clear and his tongue was recovering its usefulness. He had the strength to smile at me and to stammer twice, 'Vic-toi-re!'

"'Yes, my dear Colonel, a great victory.'

"And as fast as I gave him the details of MacMahon's success, I saw his features relax and his face grow brighter.

"When I was leaving, the grandchild accompanied me to the door. She was pale and was sobbing.

"'But he is saved,' I said, taking her by the hand.

"The unhappy child had scarcely strength enough to answer me. The real news about Reichshoffen had just been posted, announcing that MacMahon was in flight, and that his army was destroyed. We looked at

each other in consternation. She was grieving also at the thought of her father. For myself, I trembled at the thought of the grandfather. He surely would not be able to resist this new shock, and what would we do? Let him keep his joy and the illusions which had brought him to life again. But in that case it would be necessary to lie.

"'Very well, then, I will lie,' said the heroic child, and drying her tears quickly, she went back like a ray of sunshine into her grandfather's room.

"It was a severe task which she had undertaken. At first, all went well. The poor man's mind was greatly weakened, and he allowed himself to be deceived as readily as if he were a child. But as he gained strength, his mind became clearer. We had to show him the course of the army's movements, and to rewrite the military bulletins for him. It was truly a pity to see the pretty child bending night and day over the map of Germany, and striving to put everything together into a glorious French campaign; Bazaine before Berlin, Frossard in Bavaria, and MacMahon at the Baltic. She sought my advice in everything, and I helped her as well as I could, but it was the old soldier himself who aided us the most in this imaginary invasion. He had conquered Germany so many times under the first empire. He knew all the campaigns in advance.

"'Now, this is where they are going to go, and that is what they are going to do,' he would say, and his prophecies were always realized, a fact which did not fail to make him very proud.

"Unfortunately we never went quickly enough for him in capturing cities and winning battles. His appetite for victory was insatiable. Every day, when I called to see him, I learned of a new French victory.

"'Doctor, we have taken Mayence,' said the young girl one day, meeting me with a weary smile. At almost the same instant I heard a joyous voice exclaim from the next room:

"'March on. March on. In eight days we shall enter Berlin.'

"At that moment the Prussians were not more than eight days from Paris. We considered at first whether it would not be better to take the colonel into the country, but as soon as he got outside of the city he would have found out the true circumstances, and I found him still too feeble and too weakened by his great shock to let him know the truth. We therefore decided to remain in Paris.

"On the first day of the siege, I went to his room—as I recollect—very much excited, and with that anguish in my soul which could only be caused by the condition of our unfortunate city, with war itself under our very walls, and our suburbs themselves converted into frontiers. I found my patient proud and contented.

"'Ah,' said he, 'the siege has commenced.'

"I looked at him in astonishment.

"'What, colonel, do you know?'

"The grandchild turned toward me. 'Yes, doctor. It is great news. The siege of Berlin has begun.'

"She said this in a perfectly quiet manner, keeping intently at her sewing. How could he suspect anything? He was not able to hear the conquerors' cannon. He could not see his unhappy Paris, broken down and destroyed. All that he could see from his bed was a part of the Arc de Triomphe, and around him, in his chamber, the mementoes of the first empire, well calculated to sustain his illusions. Portraits of marshals, pictures of battles, the king of Rome in his baby garments, large tables filled with royal relics, with medals and bronzes, the Island of St. Helena under a glass globe, some miniatures representing the patron saint of that island, dressed for a ball in a yellow gown with leg-of-mutton sleeves—and all these things representing perfectly the peculiar charm of the year 1806. It was this atmosphere of victories and conquests, more than anything else, which made him believe so readily in the siege of Berlin.

"Beginning with this day, our military operations were much simplified. It was only a matter of patience

to take Berlin. From time to time, when the old soldier was wearied too much, we read him a letter from his son, an imaginary letter, of course. You can readily imagine the despair of the poor child, without news of her father, knowing him to be a prisoner, deprived of everything and perhaps sick, and at the same time having to read happy letters from him. At last her determination failed her. No news came to the colonel for some weeks, and finally he grew very restless and could sleep no longer. Immediately a letter came from Germany, and she read it to him gayly, at the same time struggling to keep back her tears. The colonel listened attentively, smiled in an appreciative manner, approved, criticised and explained to us the meaning of the troublesome passages. But he especially enjoyed the answers which he sent to his son.

"'Never forget that you are a Frenchman,' said he once. 'Be generous to the unfortunate people. Do not let the invasion bear too heavily upon them.' And then would come some recommendations, some delightful precepts on the respect which we owe to woman. It was indeed a true military code of honor for the use of conquerors. With these he also intermingled some general considerations on political matters, on the conditions of peace which should be imposed upon the conquered country, and here he was not exacting.

"'The indemnity of war, nothing more. What good would it do to take their provinces from them? Can we make a new France out of Germany?'

"He said this in a firm voice, and there seemed to be so much candor in his words, such a beautiful, patriotic faith, that it was impossible not to be moved.

"During all this time the siege was going on, but not the siege of Berlin, unfortunately. The weather was severe, and the misery was intensified by bombardments, epidemics and famine. Nevertheless, thanks to our care and efforts, and to the indefatigable tenderness that was shown him by every one, the old soldier's peace was not disturbed for a moment. Until the end I was able to procure him white bread and fresh meat.

There was only enough for him, however, and you can imagine nothing more touching than those repasts of the poor old grandfather, so innocently selfish, he on his bed laughing happily, and beside him his dear granddaughter, somewhat pale because of her privations, guiding his hand, helping him to drink, and assisting him at everything. Then, strengthened by the meal, amid the comforts of his warm room, the cold wintry wind and the snow beating against the windows, the old cuirassier would tell of his campaigns in the North, and relate for the hundredth time the story of that unfortunate retreat from Russia, when they had nothing to eat but frozen bread and horseflesh.

"'Do you realize it, my child?' he said. 'We actually had to eat the flesh of horses!'

"She did, indeed, understand it well. For two months she had not eaten anything else. As the days went by, our task increased in proportion to the gaining strength of our patient. The enfeebled state of his mind and body, which had helped us so much until now, began to disappear. Two or three times already the terrible volleys upon the Maillot gate had caused him to jump, his ear having become as keen as that of a hunting-dog. We had to invent a second victory of Bazaine at Berlin, and tell him that the cannon were being fired from the Invalides as a salute in honor of the victory. One day, when we had pushed his bed close to the window, he saw the National Guards assembling on the avenue.

"'What are those troops doing there?' he demanded; and we heard him grumbling:

"'What a showing! What a showing!'

"Nothing more came of this, but we saw that henceforth we must take the greatest precautions. Unfortunately we did not take enough. One evening, as I was coming in, the child came to me, greatly troubled.

"'The troops are going to enter the city to-morrow,' she said.

"Was the old soldier's door open? It must have been, for I now remember that his appearance was

strangely altered that evening. It is probable that he had heard us. Only we spoke of the Prussians, and he thought of the French and of the triumphal entrance for which he had been waiting so long, with MacMahon marching down the avenue amid flowers and the flourish of trumpets, his son at the marshal's side, and he up above on the balcony, in a grand uniform like that which he had worn at Lutzen, saluting the tattered flags and the powder-stained eagles.

"Poor Colonel Jouve! He had undoubtedly imagined that we would hinder him from viewing the grand return of the troops, in order to avoid too great excitement on his part. So he spoke to no one, but on the following day, at the same hour that the Prussian battalions were entering the long avenue which leads from the Maillot gate to the Tuileries, the window up there opened softly and the colonel appeared upon the balcony, his helmet on his head, his sword at his side, and in the complete uniform of a cuirassier. I still ask myself by what effort of will, by what new hold upon life, he had thus been able to put himself again in harness. He must have been greatly astonished, standing there behind the railing, to find the streets so empty and so quiet, the blinds of all the houses closed, and all Paris as gloomy as a pest-house. He must have been astonished especially at the singular appearance of the flags, which were white with red crosses upon them, and at the fact that there was nobody in the streets to greet the soldiers.

"For a moment he appeared to think that he had been deceived. But no. Behind the Arc de Triomphe there was a confused clatter, and a black line which advanced steadily. Then, little by little, the peaks of the helmets began to glisten, the drums began to sound, and through the Arc de l'Etoile, burst the triumphal ranks of Schubert.

"Then, in the dreadful silence a terrible cry was heard: 'Aux armes! Aux armes! Les Prussiens!' And the four Uhlans of the advance guard saw high above them on the balcony a tall old man stagger and fall prone upon the floor. Colonel Jouve was dead."

It is not a pleasant thought that one has killed a man, even in self-defence. Still there are men and men; and perhaps a Mexican "greaser" is as satisfactory a man to kill as one can find, if the deed must be done. Here is the thrilling tale of such a deed, as related by L. Sutton in the Lewiston (Me.) *Journal.*

AT LUELLEN.

I do not see how I could have avoided doing it, and yet it has weighed heavy on my conscience ever since.

I was making my first trip to Mexico. Cold weather was approaching, and so I had taken a rifle with me, hoping that at some point I should be able to get a shot or two at deer or turkeys. I say "a" rifle, and not "my" rifle, for I knew that on the level surface and in the thick underbrush of western Texas I should have no opportunity to use my long-range, single-shot Remington that I had carried with me for years. Consequently I had obtained especially for this journey a light Winchester, with which rapid firing could be done at short distances, but with which I felt entirely unacquainted.

The country east of the Rio Grande for a long distance was then a savage wilderness. Not a village of any size, hardly a permanent dwelling of any kind, was to be found. The only representatives of the human race to be met were the employees of the single line of railway that passed through the territory, and the bands of wicked-looking Indians that roved everywhere, ready to commit any kind of a crime and then to escape by slipping over the boundary into their own country.

Soon after leaving San Antonio, I began to hear conversations in the train about some murders that had been committed during the previous week at a station of the road called Luellen. Three men who had separately, for different purposes, alighted at that point had been shot in the back and robbed of all their valua-

bles. Indians had been seen in the vicinity, and they were beyond all doubt the assassins. Workmen employed by the railway-company had reported the crimes and brought the bodies to the station for identification, but declared themselves unable to give any information that could lead to the detection of the criminals. I decided that whatever else I might do, I would not stop at Luellen.

I had already fixed upon the Nuaces River as the most promising place at which to commence my hunting-operations. There, I had been told, game often came out in full sight of the railway-train, and but a short walk would be necessary to carry me to a number of little green openings in the brushwood where deer loved to browse, and to a line of tall trees fringing the river on which turkeys could always be found at night. I had intended before arriving there to take off my black travelling-suit and to put on the heavy shoes, coarse drilling trousers, blue woollen shirt, and slouch hat that I always wore on the prairies and in the woods, but I had been so much interested in the conversation of my fellow-passengers, that time had passed quickly and I suddenly found myself at my destination. Not a building was in sight except a plain little shanty of rough boards that served the double purpose of station-house and home for track repairers. A few rods away stood in lazy attitude a half dozen Mexican Indians. As I moved toward the house, carrying in one hand my valise and in the other my rifle-case, and unavoidably showing a small watch-chain, they studied me with close attention. When I went through the doorway, they followed, and as I began to change my outside clothing in the one apartment that did duty as dining-room, sitting-room and sleeping-room, they watched every movement. They saw that I had property enough to make me a profitable subject for robbery, and they also had an opportunity to observe that the property consisted in part of an instrument that could throw bullets one after another with wonderful rapidity, whatever might be the accuracy of their aim.

Two railway-employees were in charge of the house, and into their care I gave my luggage. I then explained to them that I wished to spend the remainder of the day in the thicket, and that as the country was flat, presenting no prominent objects by which a stranger could direct his course, I should be glad to obtain the services of one of them as guide.

They answered that their time was paid for by the company, and that, although one of them could be spared from his post without harm, neither felt at liberty to leave. I offered them five dollars, ten dollars, and hinted at a larger sum, but could not move either of them. I must then either go alone or lose the opportunity to hunt in a particularly promising locality, and pass the rest of the day and part of the night, till the arrival of the next train, in a wretched hovel, without any occupation whatever. I decided in favor of the former course; so buckling on my cartridge belt and throwing my rifle over my shoulder, I leaped the light fence in the rear of the house and the next moment was in a wilderness in which, without care, one could be hopelessly lost in a few moments. Consulting my compass often, and keeping in mind the speed with which I walked, I moved away from the station at a right angle with the railway.

The ground was nearly covered by mesquite-bushes growing in dense clumps, the spaces between being carpeted with fine, soft buffalo-grass that gave out no sound under the tread. I had travelled four or five miles, all of the time listening eagerly for game, when my attention was arrested by the breaking of a twig behind me. I dropped instantly behind a cactus-plant and lay perfectly still. So quiet was the air that the beating of my heart seemed to me to make a great noise. Looking steadily in the direction in which I had heard the crackling, I at length saw an apparent change of form going on in a small upturned stump, eighty or ninety yards away. One side of it, which presented a confused effect by reason of projecting roots, seemed to be gradually swelling out and becoming solid. Was I

deceived? Surely that was a human head that was stealthily forcing itself into view. And what was that long black object, glistening just a little at the outer end, that I saw gradually working its way to a position in a straight line with me? It could be nothing else than a rifle. Then I heard a low, sharp click. The man before me was plainly one of the Mexican Indians that I had seen at the station. He had followed me to murder and rob me. He knew precisely where I lay, and waited only for me to rise a little, to send a bullet spinning through my forehead Fortunately I was better concealed than he.

My mind worked rapidly. I thought of my pleasant home, my friends, the thousand experiences that made life sweet to me. I remembered that I had obligations to meet, work to do. Though I might have acted foolishly in entering into so wild a place alone, my purpose was honest, I intended no harm to any one, I had a right to be there. Must I be shot down like a dog, by a miserable savage, that he might possess himself of the trinkets about my person? But could I trust my Winchester? True, the distance was short, but in such a crisis I lacked faith in a new and an almost untried weapon. My eye was on the sights, my finger on the trigger, and almost unconsciously I pulled. A scream, a dirty hand raised in the air, and then perfect stillness again. What next? Was I probably surrounded? If I should rise, should I be riddled with lead coming from all directions? I remained perfectly quiet for some time, and then crept cautiously toward my would-be murderer. He was dead, sure enough. I did not like to look at him. I started back toward the railway, intentionally describing a large circle in my course, and arrived after dusk. No Indians were in the station-house. The two white men looked surprised when they saw me. Said one of them:

"Well, yer a lucky chap. Me an' Bill didn't 'xpect t' see yer no more 'round here 'live. Them air greasers hangin' 'round all th' time 'd jes like ter kill yer fer yer boots er yer hat, t' say nothin' 'bout yer

pocket-book. We sh'd er told yer 'bout 'em, but didn't have no chance ter talk ter yer 'lone. They say yer handled a gun like 's yer were bro't up with one; p'raps they took yer fer one o' them ere San Antonio blacklegs that shoot like ther devil, and just d'light ter have er chance ter kill some un in a nat'ral sort er way. Why, three men've bin shot by them critters within er week in this place, and——"

"Why, I thought that happened at Luellen."

"Well, thunder! this is Luellen; folks used to call it Nuaces River."

A moment more, and the west-bound express came roaring along, and soon afterward I was settled down in a comfortable berth for the night, but I could not keep out of my mind the dead man lying under the trees.

M. Ernest D'Hervilly, in the following dainty little reminiscence, will waft every reader back to the days of his childhood. It has been translated for ROMANCE by Annie K. Almy.

THE WIZARD OF PLAISANCE.

ONE morning I was tempted by the lovely sunshine to play truant. While walking along the sandy road of the frontier of Plaisance, I encountered five ladies and one gentleman. Twenty years might have been the sum of all their ages. It seemed to me their respective faces would be better for the timely aid of soap and water. This, however, was only my own idea.

I doubt if they would agree with me for two reasons; in the first place, they were all completely absorbed in something of far more importance, and, secondly, these five ladies and one gentleman thought their own tiny hands (although they were besmeared with mud) sufficient for every such purpose.

They were all prostrate before some minute fortifications, which they had made of sand, moistened, it must be confessed, with saliva. Inside the walls of the fortifications was a square, which they had carefully swept with their fingers; the corners of the ramparts were strengthened by mud-pies. In the centre of the square was erected a tomb, in the form of a pyramid. It was made of pebbles which had been carefully cleaned. Perhaps this was to render them more brilliant; but it is a well-known fact that, in the absence of liquorice, pebbles are most agreeable to suck.

Around the tomb were placed memorials, much after the fashion of certain savage tribes, who bury various articles with a great chief gone to the "happy hunting grounds." In this case, they consisted of a scrap of black tulle; two yellow immortelles; a figure from a colored fashion-plate; a watch crystal, under which had been deposited several buttons; and a tiny bottle, full of water. That was all.

This imposing and mysterious display, the tomb, the ramparts, and, above all, the children, mute and prostrate, riveted my attention.

I stopped in contemplation, and my shadow, falling suddenly on the square, warned the mourners of the presence of a stranger. They raised their heads. Twelve little eyes met mine, changed for the time into two interrogation-points.

"Sir," said the man of the party, in a most penetrating voice (decidedly he should be named commander-in-chief of the army of *snifflers*), "Sir, we have lost our butterfly!"

"Is it possible!" I replied.

"Yes, sir. It was only a short time ago that we caught him. We gave him some grass, but he is dead. We breathed upon him, but it wasn't of any use. He is dead!"

"Truly," I said, "this is very sad."

"Sir, we have just raised this monument to him."

Then I comprehended the overpowering grief of the ladies and the gentleman, and I uncovered my head.

One of the little girls spoke. "He is there, sir," pointing to the tomb.

"Please give something for him," murmured another of the afflicted ones.

It might have been emotion, I do not know—but something prevented my attempting any words of condolence. Silently I picked a tiny flower, and with the slow and solemn step of a mourner, I placed the modest token of my deep regret at the foot of the monument, raised in memory of the departed butterfly. The perfect gravity of my action seemed to add fresh importance to the dead insect. The bereaved ones were about to leave the mortal remains buried in the tomb, for other exercises; but when they saw a man—a man with a long beard, who did not disdain to place a flower on this freshly-scraped and moistened earth, the thought struck them that possibly they had not sufficiently appreciated the qualities of the defunct, and, full of ardor, they demolished the pyramid to gaze once more upon

the features of the winged corpse. Bang! the last pebble fell, and the butterfly, like Lazarus, came forth! Without delay, he flew off, though not in a very straight line. He had the appearance of having taken a drop too much, but he quickly disappeared, and to the group of mourners it was indeed a miracle.

But, oh! the unmerited disgrace! The party drew back and looked at me distrustfully. I was no longer to them a mere passer-by. I had brought to life a dead butterfly. Henceforth they would know me as "The Wizard of Plaisance." I was left alone, by the ruined tomb, the miserable object of an unjust suspicion, utterly crushed by the weight of six overwhelming reproaches!